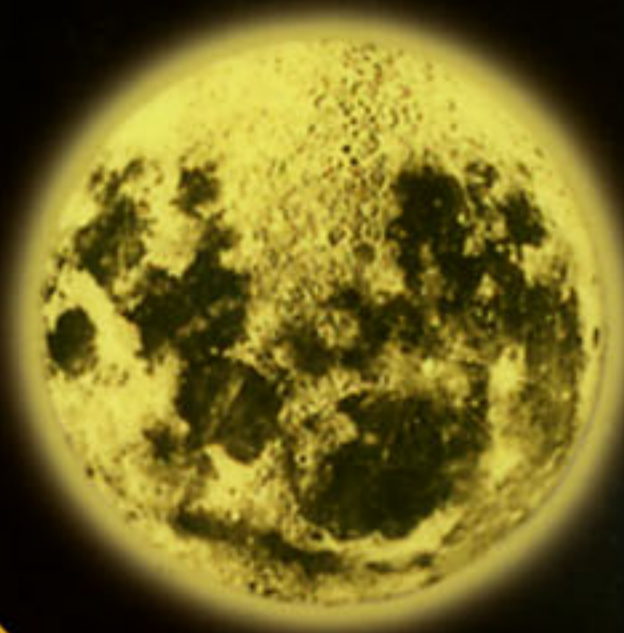


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THE BIG BOOK OF DEATH



INTRODUCTION BY

LUC SANTE

Author of EVIDENCE and LOWLIFE

ISBN: 1-56389-166-2

THE BIG BOOK OF DEATH



BY
**BRONWYN
CARLTON**
AND 67 OF
THE WORLD'S TOP
COMIC ARTISTS



PARADOX PRESS
NEW YORK

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INTRODUCTION

BY
LUC SANTE

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here to pay our respects to King Death, undisputed ruler of our days, measurer of our earthly frames, cashier of our chips, purchaser of our farms, punter of our buckets, ticket-agent for the western trains. We will all of us go to the prom with death one of these years, but we'll never be ready for the date, since our partner will pretty much always arrive at the door unexpectedly. Thus it is that we won't know what death looks like until it is too late to turn in a description. Nobody ever has — well, some people have come out of comas with reports of long tunnels and bright lights, but there's no way to prove these visions are anything other than dreams. In the meantime, all we can do is speculate, and we can do lots of that, since we know virtually everything about death except the crucial element.

Imagine you are an inhabitant of a distant planet, majoring in Earth Science and writing your senior thesis on food. You'd have a warehouse full of materials brought back from the third stone from the

sun: cookbooks, computer models of the salivary gland, chunks of Roquefort cheese, photographs of restaurants, bags of pretzel logs, x-rays of the digestive tract, trays of frozen meat patties, test tubes full of stomach acids, scratch-and-sniff cards for garlic and bacon and toast, videos of pie-eating contests, statistical charts of ice-cream melting rates, maybe even a live human in a glass case working his way through a nine-course banquet. You'd have everything at hand, in fact, but (since you yourself process carbon monoxide and have, strictly speaking, no mouth) not the knowledge of what it is like to eat. That's much the way it is with us and death. Except, of course, that one day we'll be handed that last piece of the puzzle, and it will be the last thing we ever learn.

That lingering question mark is just one of the features that make death such a perennial topic of fascination, but it underlies all the others. Death may be as ordinary as winter, but it still scares us because *our* death is unknown to us. Our death hangs over us by a hair, like the proverbial sword of Damocles, and even if we don't think about it consciously, every time we think of death at all we are

reminded of our own. That gives death its ironclad reliability as a dramatic convention. How many non-comedy movies have you seen in which nobody dies? Fear itself may be creepy, but to confront fear, to laugh at it, is positively sexy. As long as it is managed, boxed, fictionalized, anecdotalized, represented in a safe way, death satisfies. You might not much enjoy hanging around the aftermaths of bloody car crashes, and you probably would not have experienced pleasure as a tourist in Burundi in the spring of '94, but on the other hand you do have fun seeing movies by John Woo or Quentin Tarantino or Sam Peckinpah in which dozens or even hundreds of characters get blown away. Every bullet fired by a movie gun hits your adrenal gland; the more bullets fly, the more pumped you get. Every one of those bullets has your name on it, only it's written in disappearing ink. The fear is followed a microsecond later by relief. You feel bigger, momentarily.

A similar principle applies to deaths occurring in the real world (provided, again, that you are not actually present at the occurrence, and that they do not happen to someone you care deeply about), especially if they have something of the 300-pound cabbage about them — that is, if they are especially weird or stupid or ironic or dramatic, extreme without being an actual threat. I can't imagine that there is anybody reading this book who wasn't possessed, for some portion of kidhood, with the idea that you could kill somebody on the sidewalk with a penny thrown off the top deck of the Empire State Building. A penny! Are you kidding? You couldn't stop thinking about it even after Mr. Bowser in science class pointed out that the penny would only hit the 88th floor setback. You

could imagine yourself on both the dispensing and receiving ends of the proposition. If you visited New York City, you'd be deliciously scared to walk down 34th Street. The whole idea encapsulated the iconic (the building), the improbable (the penny), and the terrifyingly easy (as William S. Burroughs, who ought to know, once put it, "No one owns life, but anybody who can pick up a frying pan owns death"), in a formula that not incidentally resembled that of a dirty joke. In those days, when sex and death were both misty abstractions, it might not always have been clear to you where one left off and the other began.

Well, it might not be entirely clear to you even now — some of the greatest minds have hit a sandbar while contemplating this point. In any event, those two colossal human properties are both located behind doors that are plastered with signs that say "Keep Away!" while prominently displaying eye-level peepholes that just about command you to look. So you do, feeling sweaty and a bit guilty. Once again, remember childhood: you'd be in a garage passing around somebody's father's skin mags one week, the next it would be atrocity pictures somebody else's grandfather brought back from the war. From week to week, it would be like experimenting with a giant switchboard of your reflexes and emotions: excitement, fear, embarrassment, wonder, nausea, guilt, laughter, perspiration — oh, the order and proportion would vary, of course. But in either case, while you were trying to convince your friends that you were cool, you'd seen it all before, in reality you were hanging off the edge, peering into the abyss. But you're cool nowadays, aren't you, sport? You'll display this book on your

coffee table, maybe bring it in to work and leave it on top of your desk. It's all part of your interest in the human estate.

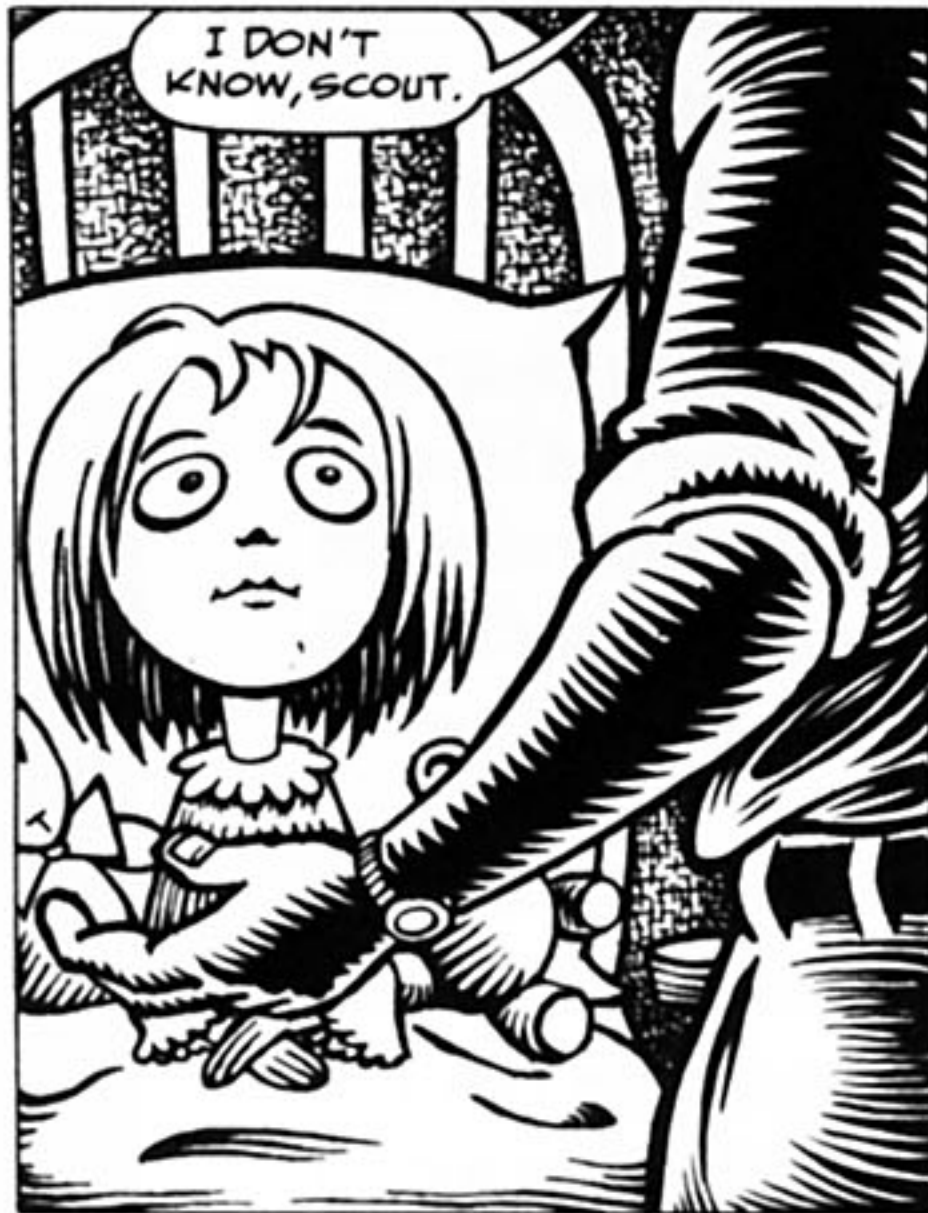
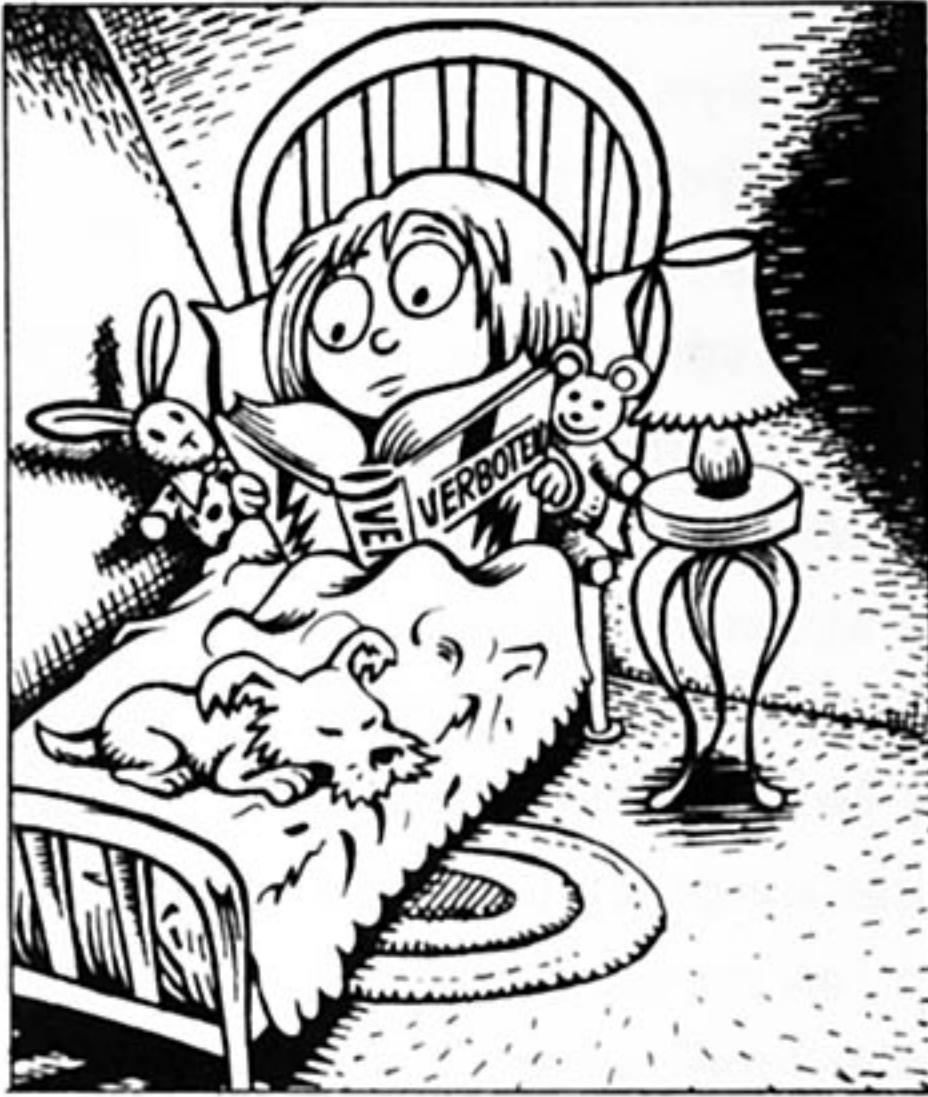
Your interest is so scientific that you're probably reading this in bed, eating cheese curls, awaiting a visit from sleep, death's kid brother, who is taking his time in coming around. It will be that way for the rest of the night: sleep will delay, you will continue reading, sleep will delay some more. Observe your detachment. Contemplate stoning, beheading, the electric chair, painless lethal injection, none of which could ever happen to you because, as we know, you are not a criminal, nor could you ever be — you are as spotless as a newborn anacephalic lamb. You will never be murdered, since you have no enemies and you live in the safest, most secure suburb in the United States. You drive like a parson on his way to church, boil your drinking water, bathe in a foam-lined tub, avoid attendance at contentious sports events, wear a hat when the thermometer dips below 50°, never answer the phone during electric storms, refuse to open questionable packages, insist on smoke-free hotels. You will probably never die. Unless, of course . . . a large bird flies straight into your windshield, a block of frozen urine released by an airliner picks your roof as its destination, a mislabeled can of tuna fish on your shelf contains a hitherto unknown strain of botulism, the first tornado in two hundred years happens to come barreling up your street. Let's face it: Fate has taped a target to your back.

But why worry? The book you are holding in your hands will put it all into perspective. Bronwyn Carlton, who wrote it, is famed for her weekly radio show on WFMU

in East Orange, N.J. featuring News of the Dead. What Elisabeth Kubler-Ross is to denial and acceptance, Bronwyn is to the informed chuckle, the clear-eyed stare, the knowing chill. She approaches death the way a human fly approaches vertigo, with a serene curiosity. Here she has marshaled the complicated subject, organized it with philosophical rigor, and assembled an all-star team of amazing cartoonists to make it dance across the page. In the course of these 200 pages she pries up dusty lids, pokes a light into forgotten corners, examines overwhelming enormities and tiny afterthoughts from the back pages of discarded newspapers, looks into nagging questions, throws in jolts of bracing sanity. By the time you are done reading, you will be ready to join the dance, take a skeletal hand in each of yours, go round and round, right foot left foot, that caterpillar step that runs all the way through history and won't stop until there are no more living.

LUC SANTE is the author of *Low Life* (Vintage Books), a chronicle of the dark side of New York City in the 19th century, and of *Evidence* (Noonday Books), which examines photographs of murder scenes taken by the New York Police Department between 1914 and 1918. He is not at all morbid, but he does own a chip from Baudelaire's grave. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and their dog and cat.

FOREWORD:



CHAPTER ONE

MAKING A KILLING

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Of all the industrialized Western nations, only the United States still practices capital punishment, and even within the U.S. there's no consensus as to method. Some states prefer old-fashioned techniques such as hanging (*page 17*) or the firing squad (*page 20*), while others use new-fangled technology like electricity (*page 23*) to put the probably-guilty to death. Some states don't have capital punishment at all, which leads to cases like that of Thomas Grasso, who was convicted of murder in both New York (no death penalty) and Oklahoma (lethal injection — see *page 31*). When he was sentenced to a life term in the former to be served *before* he could be put to death in the latter, Grasso fought to be sent immediately to Oklahoma so he wouldn't have to wait to die. This raises the obvious question: Which is the greater deterrent — life, or death?

A SHORT HISTORY OF EXECUTION

ALL RIGHT, SON, LET'S BEGIN WITH A REVIEW. NAME ME THREE EARLY TYPES OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.



"AND CRUCIFIXION - THAT WAS MOSTLY WHAT ROMANS DID TO FOREIGN CRIMINALS AND CHRISTIANS. FIRST THEY'D WHIP THE GUY. THAT'S CALLED 'SCOURGING.' THE POINT WAS, HE'D LOSE SO MUCH BLOOD, HE'D BE REALLY WEAK."



"THEN HE HAD TO CARRY THE CROSSBAR OF THE CRUCIFIX TO WHEREVER THE UPRIGHT PART WAS. THEY'D GIVE HIM A DRINK OF BITTER WINE TO HELP KILL THE PAIN A LITTLE."



"AFTER THAT, THEY THREW HIM ONTO HIS BACK AND DROVE 5-INCH SPIKES THROUGH HIS WRISTS BECAUSE IF YOU PUT NAILS THROUGH THE PALMS OF THE HANDS, THE WEIGHT OF THE BODY WILL JUST PULL THEM LOOSE."



"THEN THE CROSSBAR WENT UP ON THE UPRIGHT, AND THE GUY HUNG THERE FOR 2 OR 3 DAYS, BLEEDING AND STARVING WITH BUGS AND BIRDS GOING AT HIM.



"THE WEIGHT OF THE HANGING BODY MADE IT HARD TO BREATHE AND HE LOST BLOOD FROM THE SCOURGING, AND IT HURT REAL BAD. IF THEY FELT SORRY FOR YOU, THEY'D STAB YOU IN THE SIDE SO YOU'D DIE FASTER.



"AND STONING WAS IN THE NEAR EAST ABOUT THE SAME TIME, ABOUT THE FIRST CENTURY A.D. THEY'D TIE THE GUY'S HANDS BEHIND HIS BACK AND TAKE HIM OUT TO THE STONING PLACE.



"EVERYONE WOULD GET HIS OWN ROCK, AND THE ACCUSER GOT TO THROW THE FIRST STONE.



"THE POINT WAS TO NOT HIT HIM IN THE HEAD, SO HE'D STAY CONSCIOUS THE WHOLE TIME.

"FINALLY, HE'D BE COVERED IN A BIG PILE OF ROCKS AND THE WEIGHT WOULD CRUSH HIM TO DEATH. AFTER ST. STEPHEN GOT EXECUTED THIS WAY IN 35 A.D., STONING BECAME THE BIG STAVE WAY FOR EARLY CHRISTIANS TO DIE."



EXCELLENT! AND WHAT'S ANOTHER NAME FOR STONING?

UMMM...

LAPIDATION.



LAPIDATION, RIGHT. SO, WHAT'RE WE DOING TODAY?

ENGLAND IN THE MIDDLE AGES - PRESSING, BURNING, DRAWING AND QUARTERING...



COOL!

"NOW, PRESSING WAS USED IN ENGLAND FROM THE 1300'S ON. THE ADVANTAGE WAS THAT YOU COULD USUALLY GET A CONFESSION BEFORE THE SUSPECT DIED."



"THE ACCUSED WAS STAKED SPREAD-EAGLED ON THE GROUND, WITH A FLAT BOARD ON HIS CHEST. STONES WERE PUT ON THE BOARD TO ADD WEIGHT GRADUALLY, MAKING IT HARDER AND HARDER TO BREATHE."



"THE PRISONER COULD BE FED BREAD AND WATER AND KEPT ALIVE FOR DAYS. WHEN HE CONFESSED, THEY'D LOAD ON THE ROCKS AND CRUSH HIM TO DEATH."



"KING HENRY IV MADE A BIG ADVANCE IN DEATH TECHNOLOGY BY DEVELOPING THE FIRST STANDARD PRESSING WEIGHTS."



"BACK THEN, PRESSING WAS MOST OFTEN USED FOR HERETICS, MARGARET OF YORK WAS PRESSED IN 1586 FOR BEING A CATHOLIC. WOMEN WERE PRESSED TOO, YOU SEE."



"BUT USUALLY WOMEN WERE BURNED ALIVE, AND IT WASN'T JUST JOAN OF ARC. BURNING WAS SUPPOSED TO BE SUITED TO WOMEN BECAUSE THE SENTENCE COULD BE CARRIED OUT WITH THEM KEEPING ALL THEIR CLOTHES ON."



"AND BEING TIED TO THE STAKE KEPT THEM FROM JUMPING AROUND IN AN UNSEEMLY MANNER--NOT LIKE WHEN THEY WERE HANGED, WHEN THEY'D THRASH AND KICK."



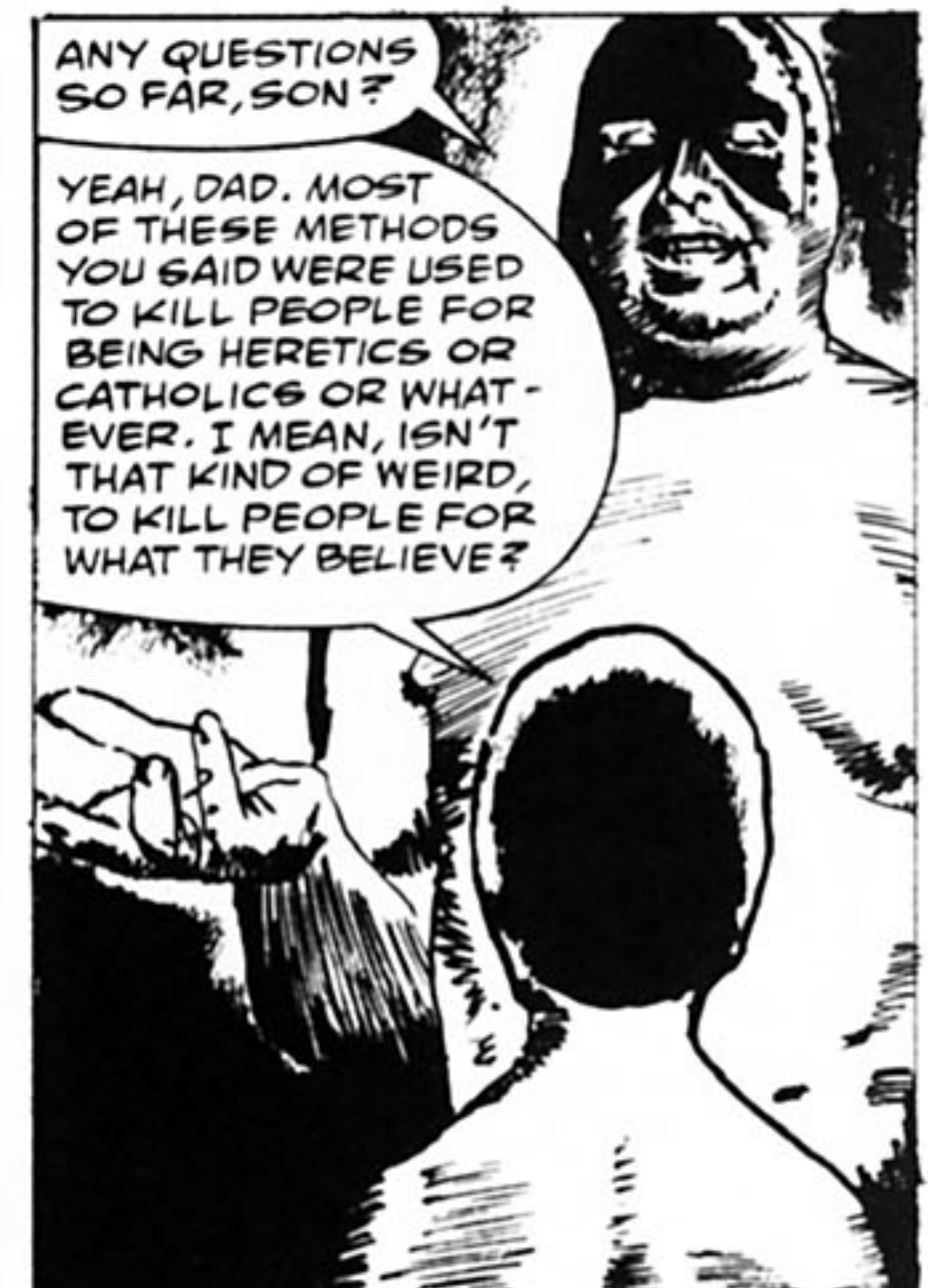
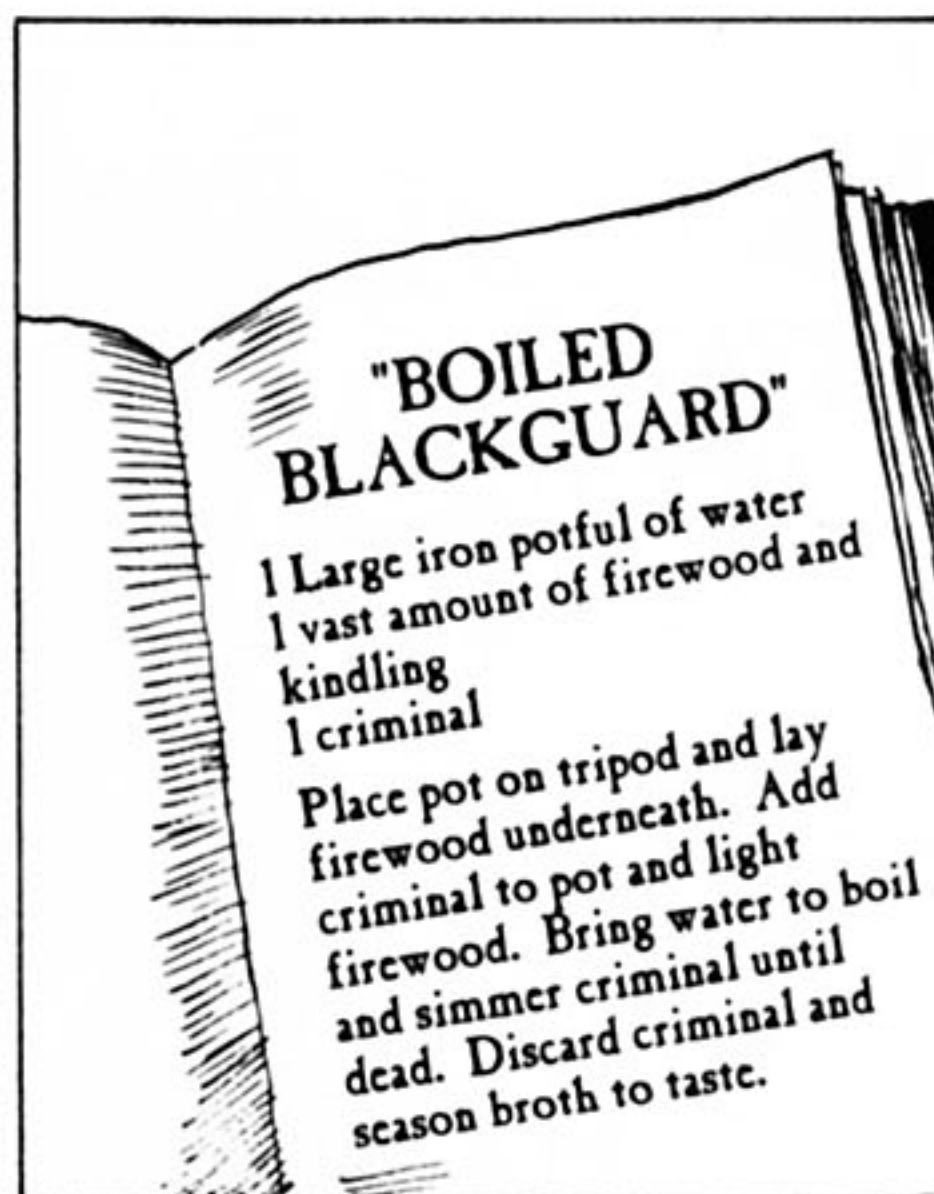
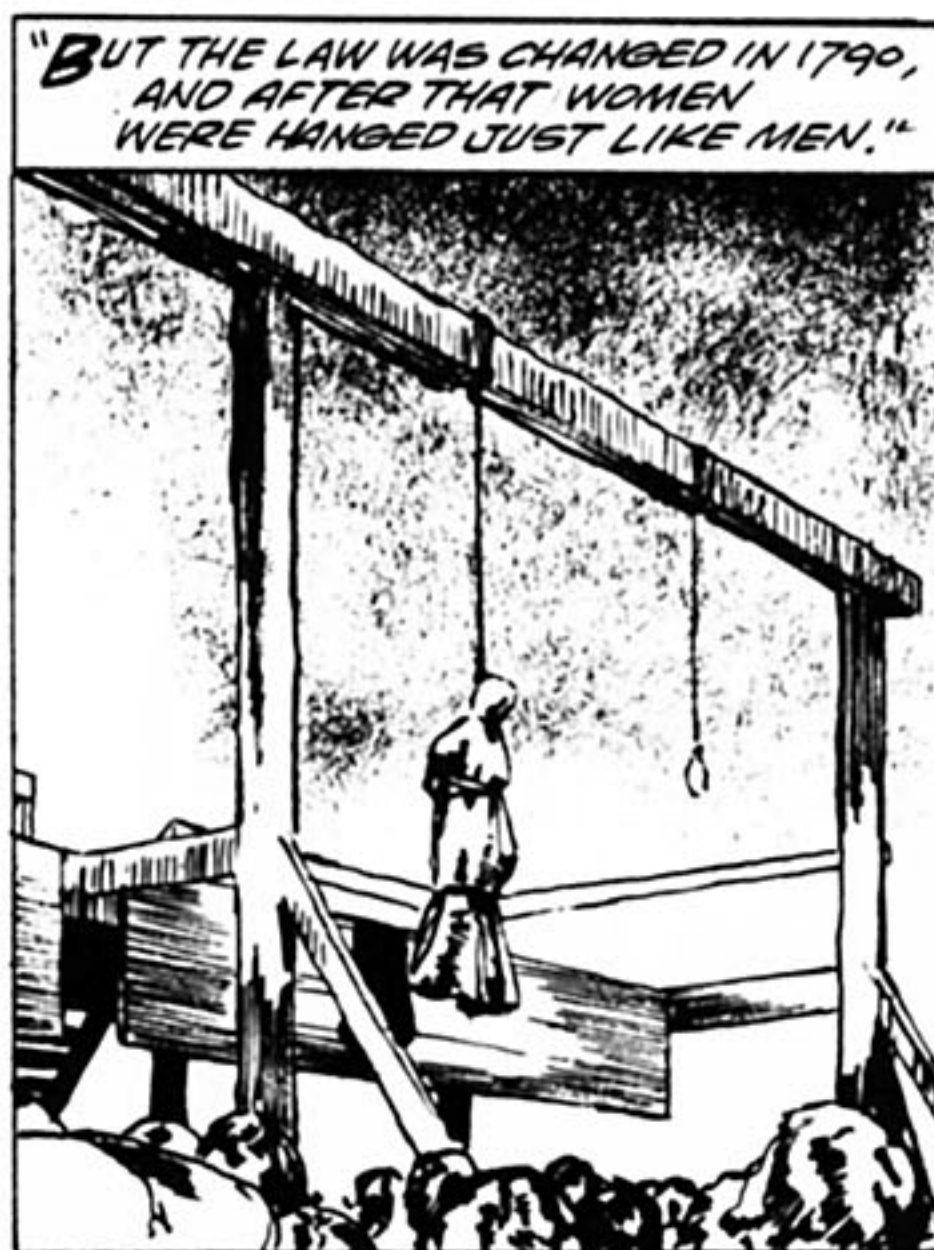
HERE'S WHAT THE LEGAL COMMENTATOR SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE SAID ABOUT IT: "AS DECENCY DUE TO THE SEX FORBIDS THE EXPOSING AND PUBLICLY MANGLING OF THEIR BODIES, THEIR SENTENCE IS...TO BE BURNED ALIVE."

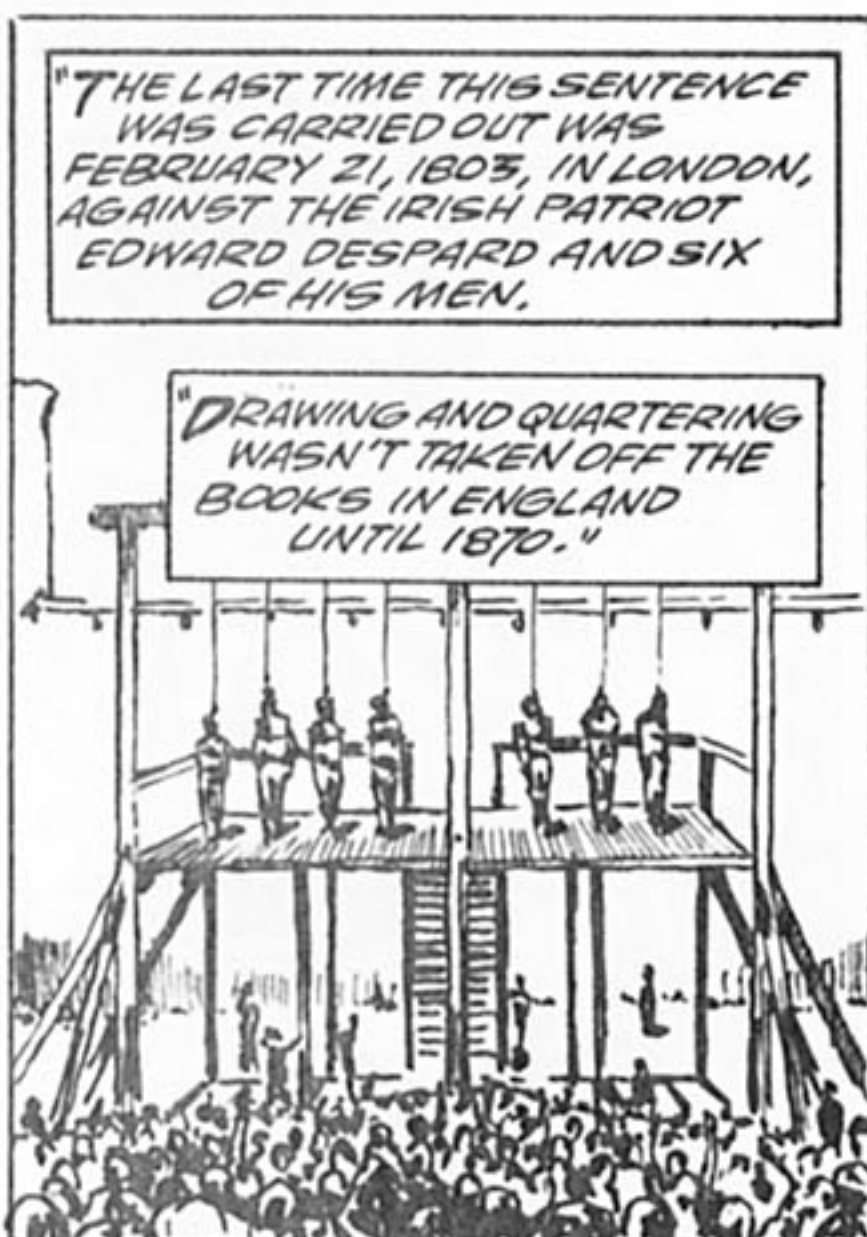
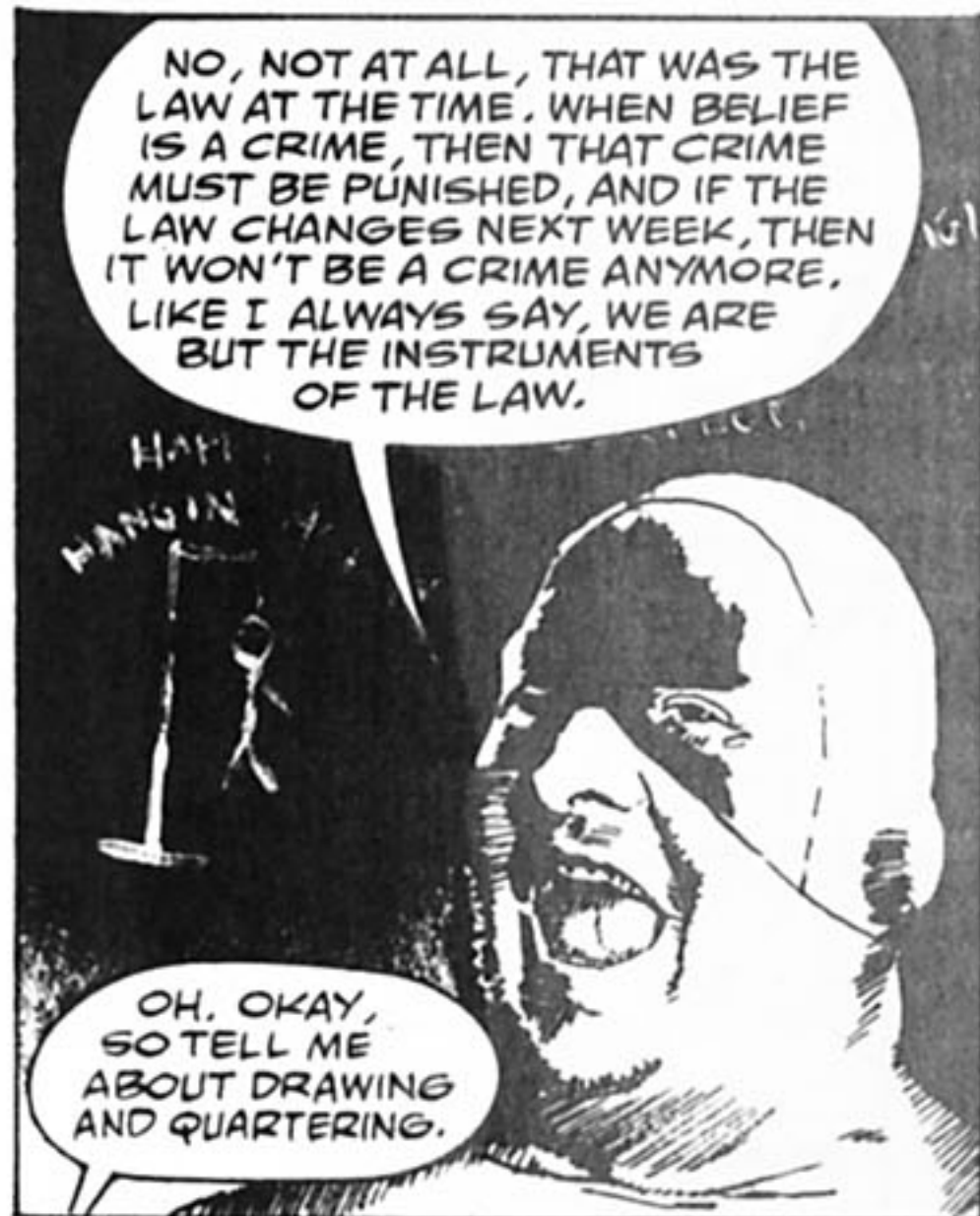


"SO THEY BURNED WOMEN UNTIL 1789, WHEN MS. CHRISTIAN BOWMAN WAS PUT TO DEATH FOR COUNTERFEITING COINS."



"SHE WAS THE LAST ONE."





HEAD'S UP, CHAPS!
IT'S TIME FOR --

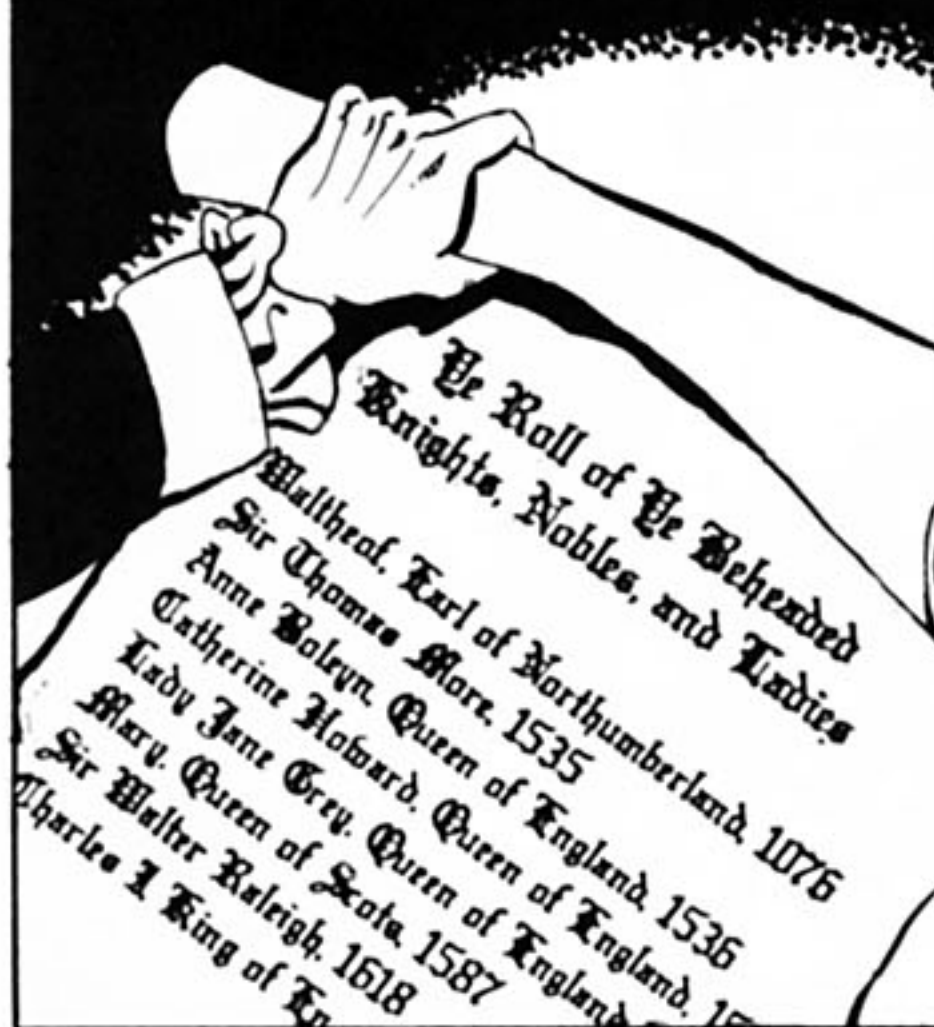
DECAPITATION!



AH, YES -- DECAPITATION! AN HONORABLE ENDING, MUCH NICER THAN HANGING. THERE'S NONE OF THAT UNSEEMLY FLAILING ABOUT, NOT TO MENTION... WELL, VOIDING, YOU KNOW. REALLY, HANGING IS SUITABLE ONLY FOR THE LOWER CLASSES, WHEREAS BEHEADING IS A DEATH FIT FOR A KING.



"ALL THE BEST FAMILIES HAD DECAPITATIONS!"



"DUE TO THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE NOBILITY, A VERY RIGID ETIQUETTE WAS DEVELOPED FOR BEHEADINGS."



"IT'S REALLY TOO BAD WHEN PEOPLE FORGET THEIR MANNERS, DON'T YOU THINK? TAKE MARGARET POLE, COUNTESS OF SALISBURY. HENRY VIII, THAT OLD TUDOR, DECIDED TO CUT OFF HER HEAD."



"AND EVEN THOUGH EVERYTHING WAS DONE JUST AS IT SHOULD BE, SHE SIMPLY REFUSED TO BEHAVE. SHE WOULDN'T PUT HER HEAD ON THE BLOCK, AND SHE RAN ABOUT, AND FINALLY THEY JUST HAD TO HACK HER TO BITS 'ON THE RUN', AS IT WERE. OF COURSE, SHE HAD A HEAD START. HAW!"



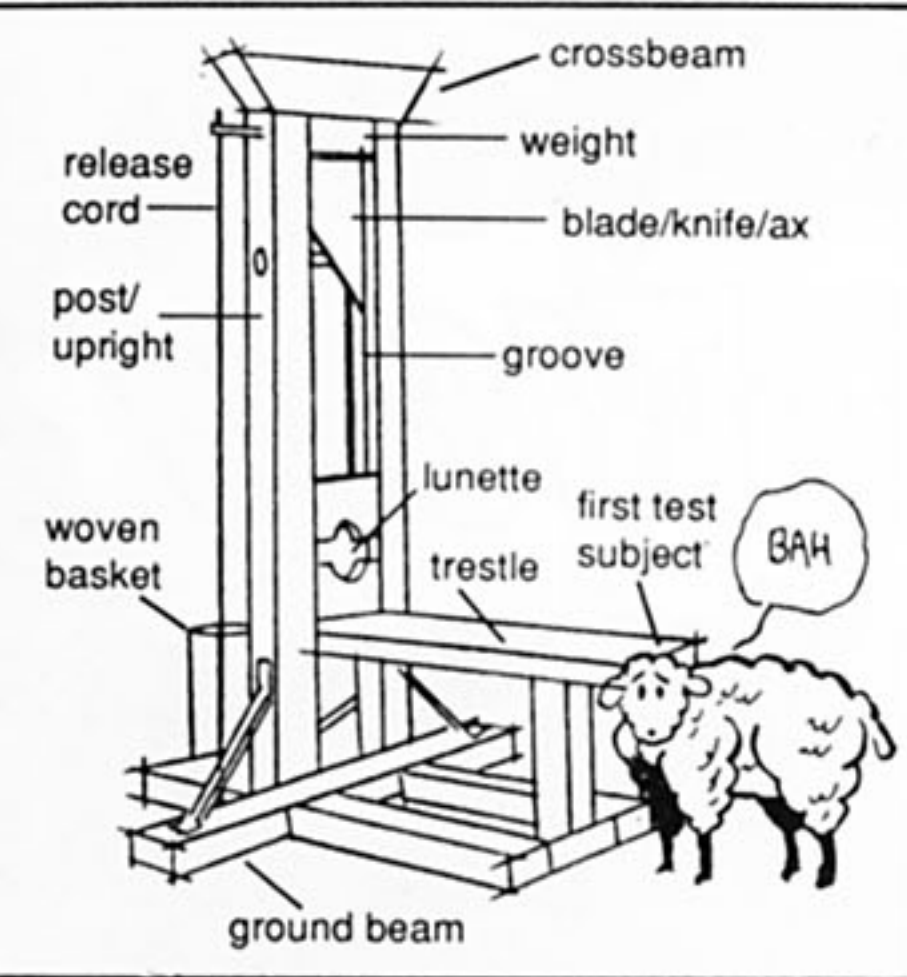
"THE GREAT ARGUMENT WAS, WHICH WAS BETTER -- THE SWORD OR THE AX?"



"THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ALWAYS CHOSE THE SWORD. ANNE BOLEYN, BEING QUEEN OF ENGLAND AT THE TIME, GOT TO PICK HER OWN EXECUTIONER, AND SHE CHOSE A MASTER SWORDSMAN FROM FRANCE.



"BUT AS USUAL, IT WAS THE FRENCH WHO RUINED EVERYTHING. IN 1792 THEY INVENTED THE GUILLOTINE, AND THAT WAS SIMPLY THE END OF BEHEADING AS A DISTINGUISHED METHOD OF DEATH.



"IT WASN'T EVEN DR. GUILLOTIN'S INVENTION; HE WAS JUST THE ONE WHO URGED THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY TO FIND A 'MERCIFUL' WAY TO EXECUTE ALL CLASSES OF PEOPLE. THE REVOLUTION MADE EVERYTHING DEMOCRATIC --INCLUDING DEATH.



"KING LOUIS XVI, MARIE ANTOINETTE, ALL THE CAKE-EATING NOBILITY OF FRANCE LOST THEIR HEADS OVER THE NEW EXECUTION MACHINE.



"2,498 PEOPLE WERE GUILLOTINED DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION, AND OBVIOUSLY THEY COULDN'T ALL BE QUALITY. THERE WERE THIEVES, ROBBERS - COMMON CRIMINALS!



"AND EVEN NOW, NO ONE'S REALLY SURE THAT IT IS A HUMANE DEATH. SCIENTISTS HAVE PERFORMED ALL SORTS OF EXPERIMENTS TO SEE WHETHER THE SEVERED HEAD STILL THINKS OR FEELS."



"MY FAVORITE STORY IS THAT DR. GUILLOTIN HIMSELF ENDED UP BEING GUILLOTINED. UNFORTUNATELY, IT TURNS OUT THAT HE DIED IN HIS BED IN 1814."



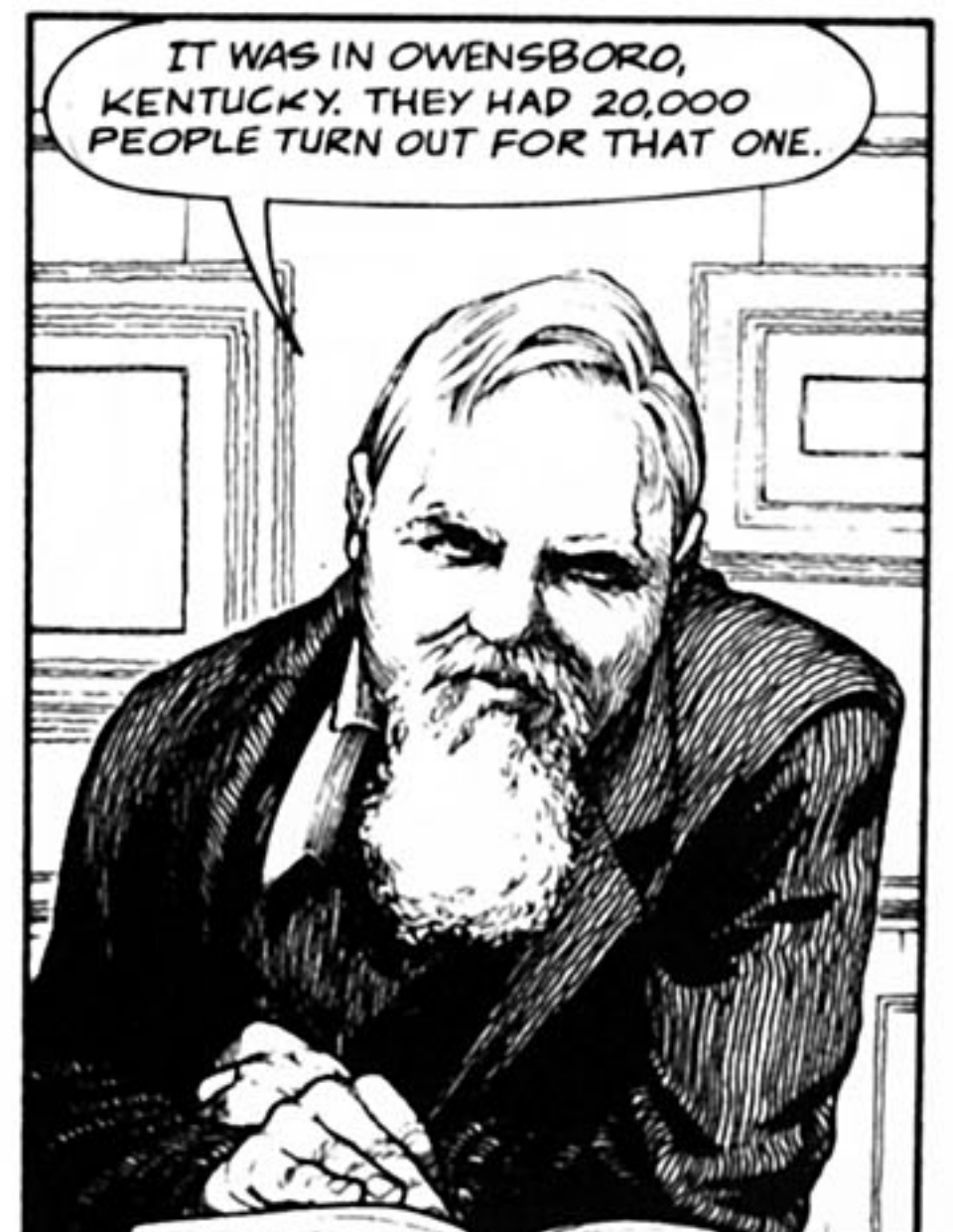
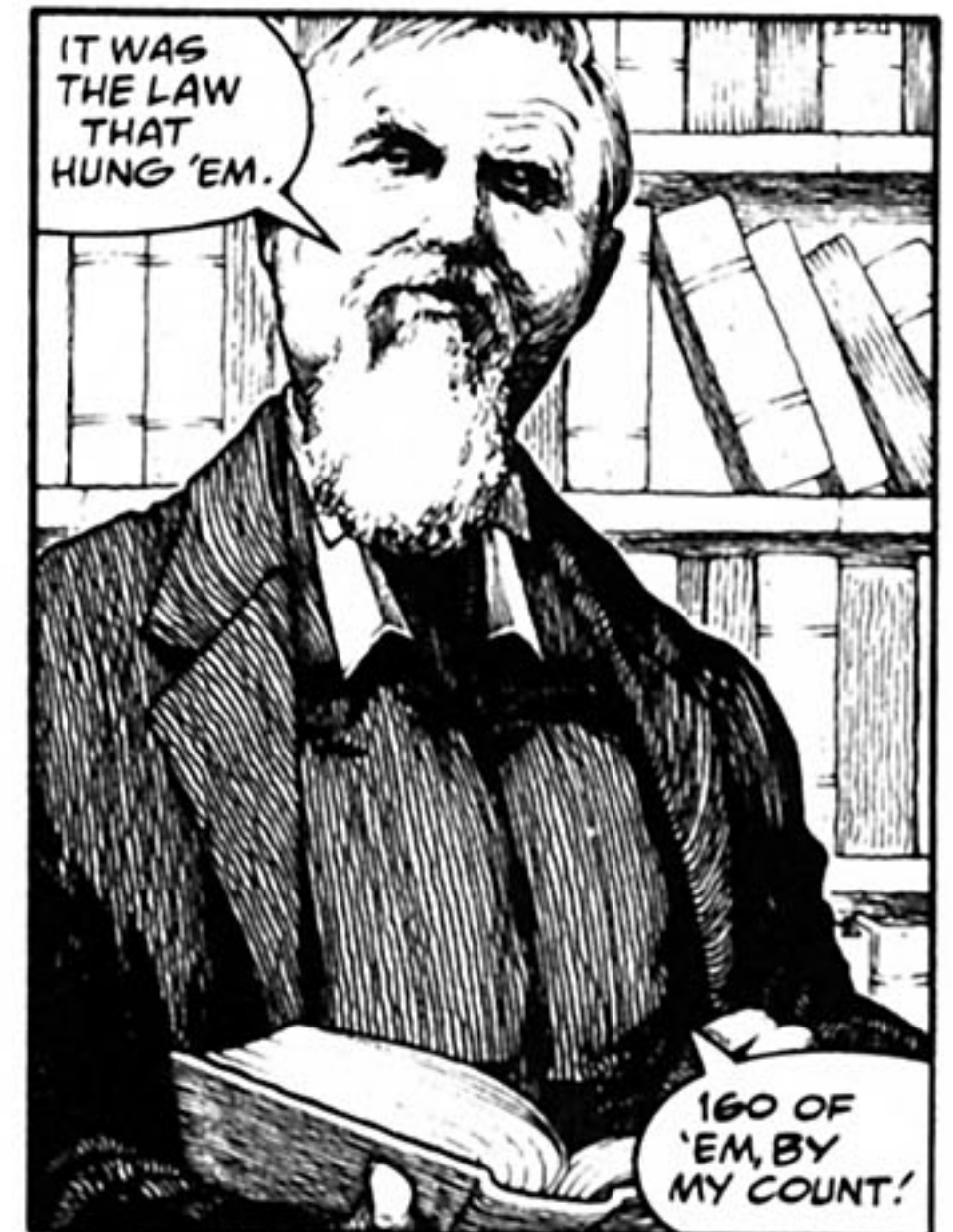
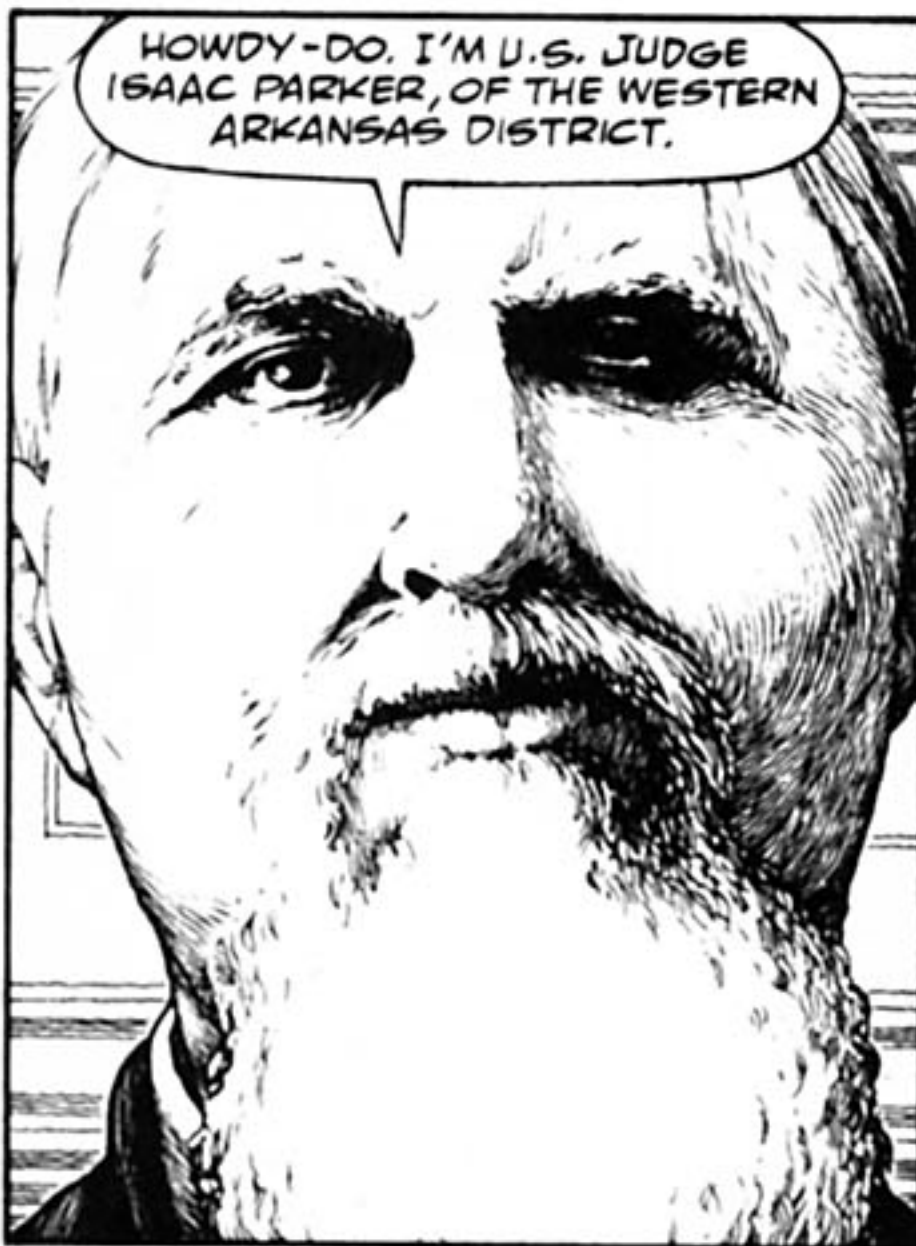
AW, THAT'S TOO BAD, 'CAUSE OTHERWISE YOU COULD'VE SAID THAT HE SHOULD'VE QUIT WHILE HE WAS ...



STOP! STOP! DON'T YOU DARE SAY IT!



A VISIT WITH THE HANGING JUDGE





NOW YOU LOOK HERE, I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING.

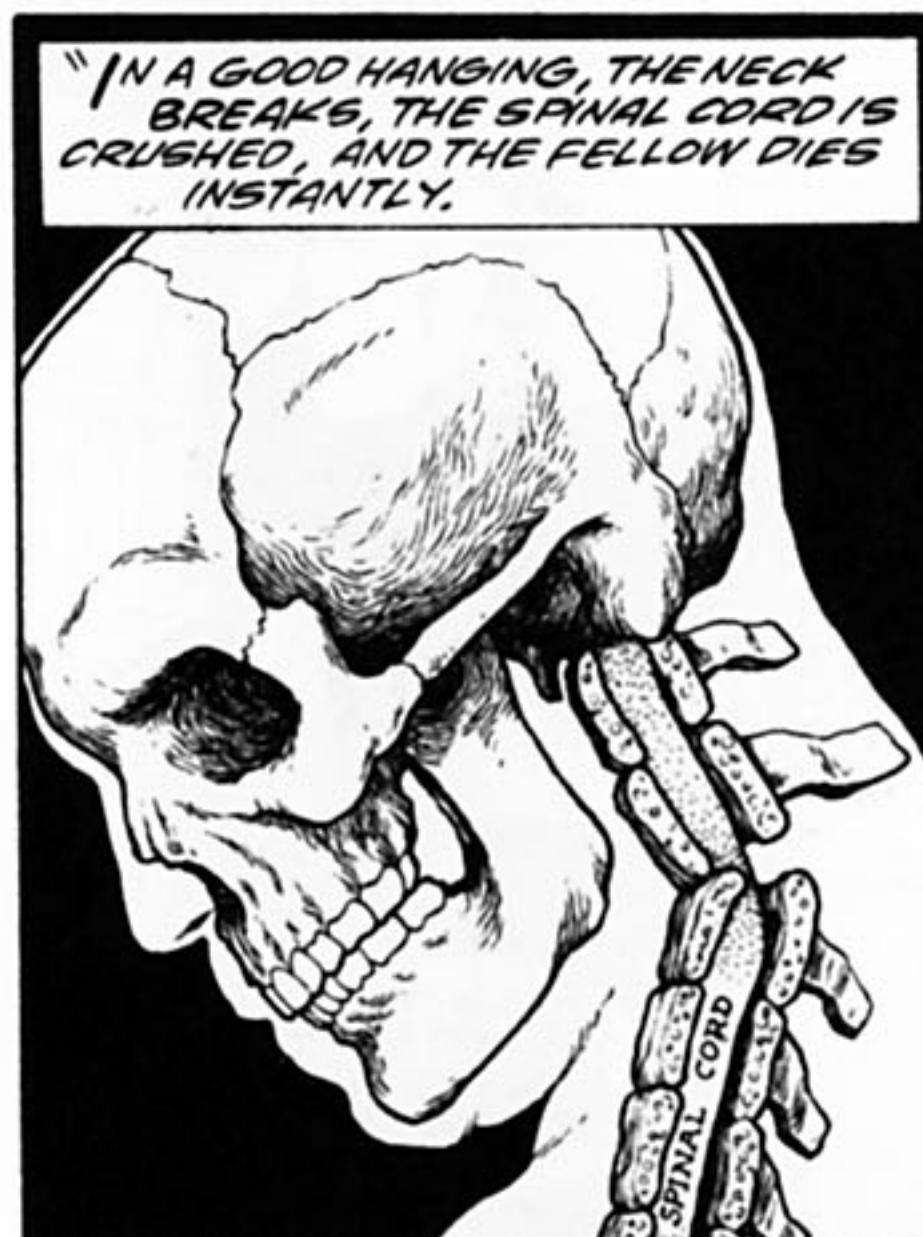
"WHEN A MAN GETS STRANGLED, THE ROPE GOES STRAIGHT AROUND THE NECK. IT LEAVES A MARK LIKE THIS."



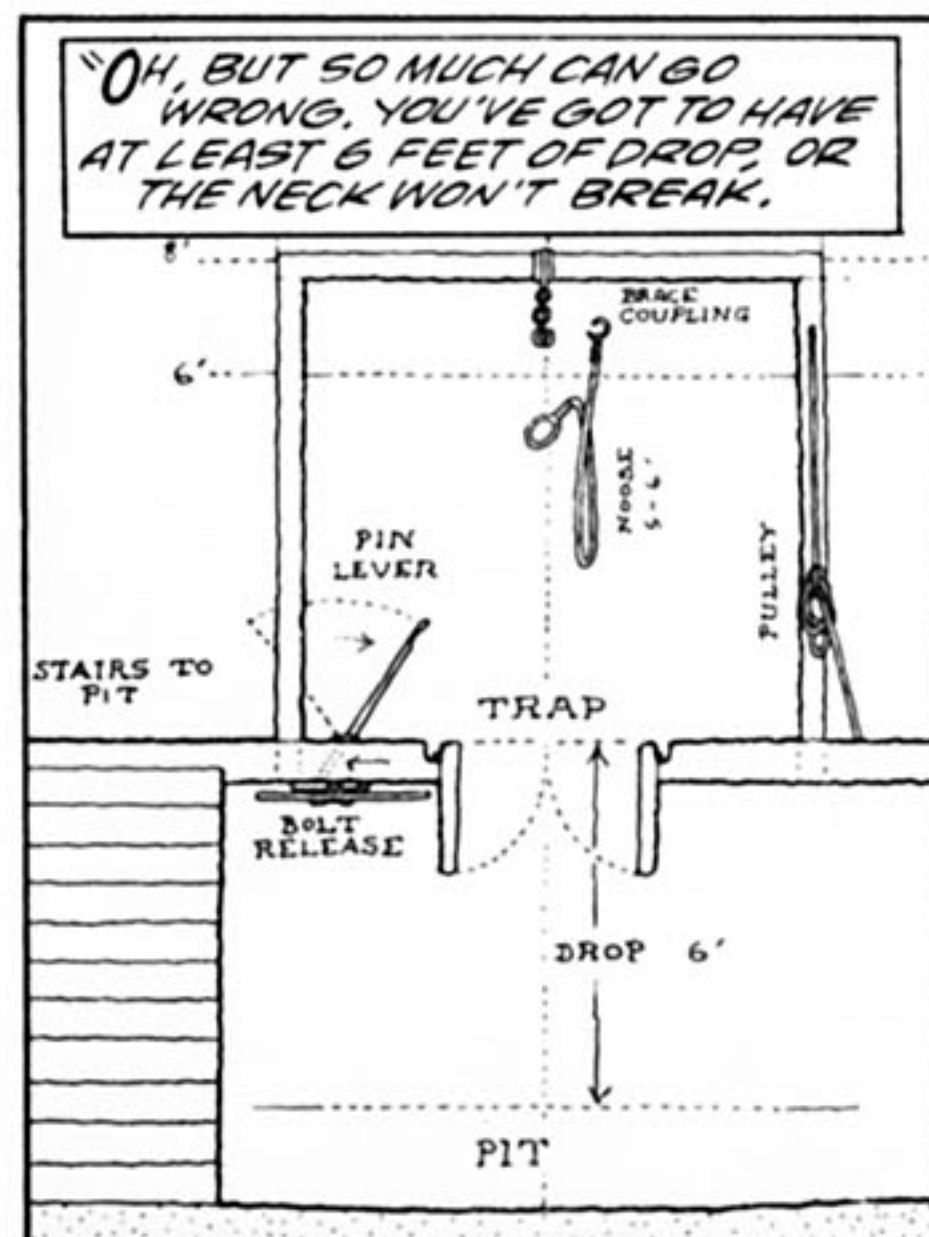
"BUT WHEN YOU HANG A MAN, THE ROPE JERKS THE KNOT UPWARD AND THE ROPEBURN LOOKS LIKE THIS."



"IT'S NOT EASY TO HANG SOMEONE PROPERLY. YOU'VE GOT TO PLACE THE KNOT BEHIND THE LEFT EAR JUST SO."



"IN A GOOD HANGING, THE NECK BREAKS, THE SPINAL CORD IS CRUSHED, AND THE FELLOW DIES INSTANTLY."



"OH, BUT SO MUCH CAN GO WRONG. YOU'VE GOT TO HAVE AT LEAST 6 FEET OF DROP, OR THE NECK WON'T BREAK."



"OR IF THE ROPE'S TOO SHORT, THE NECK WON'T BREAK. IT CAN TAKE THEM 15 MINUTES TO CHOKE TO DEATH WHEN THAT HAPPENS."

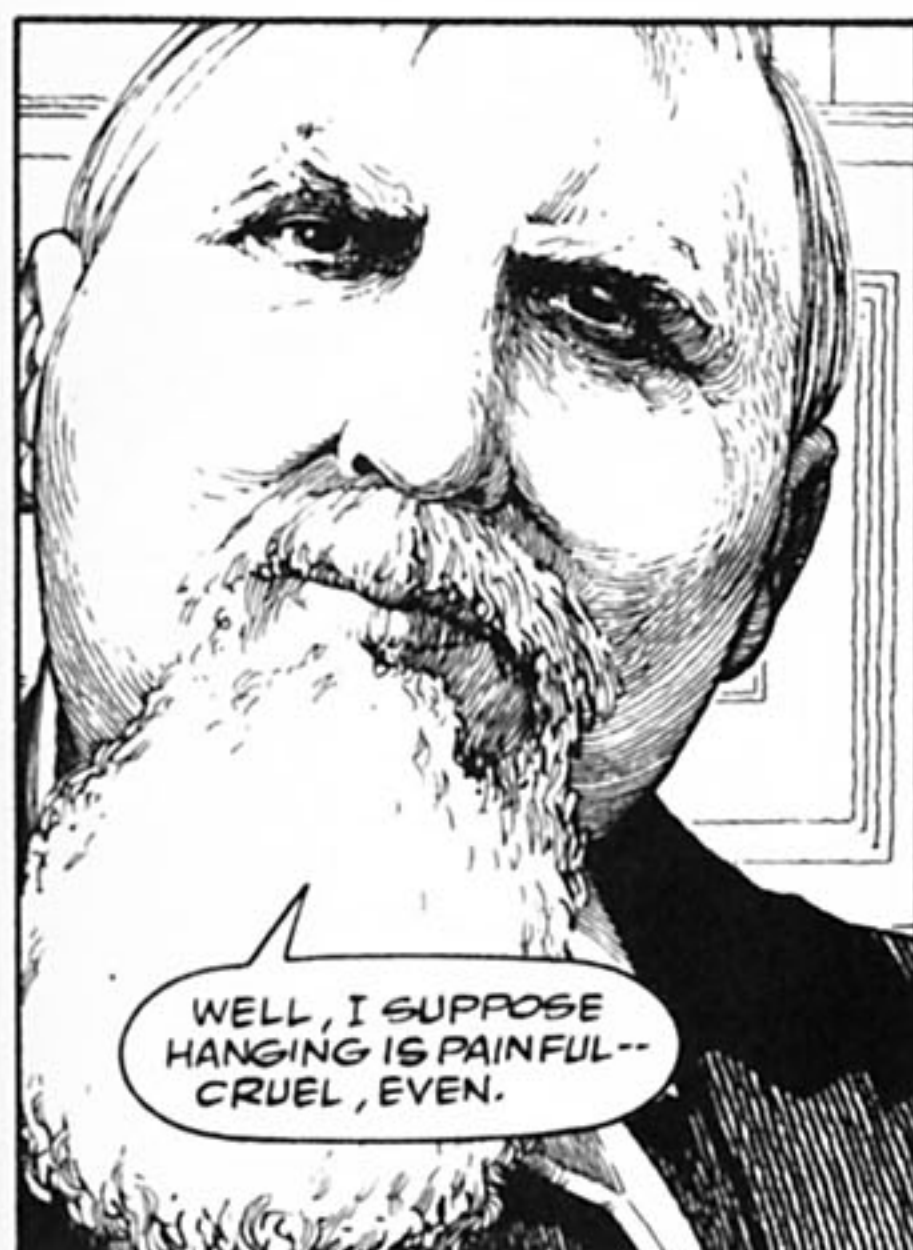
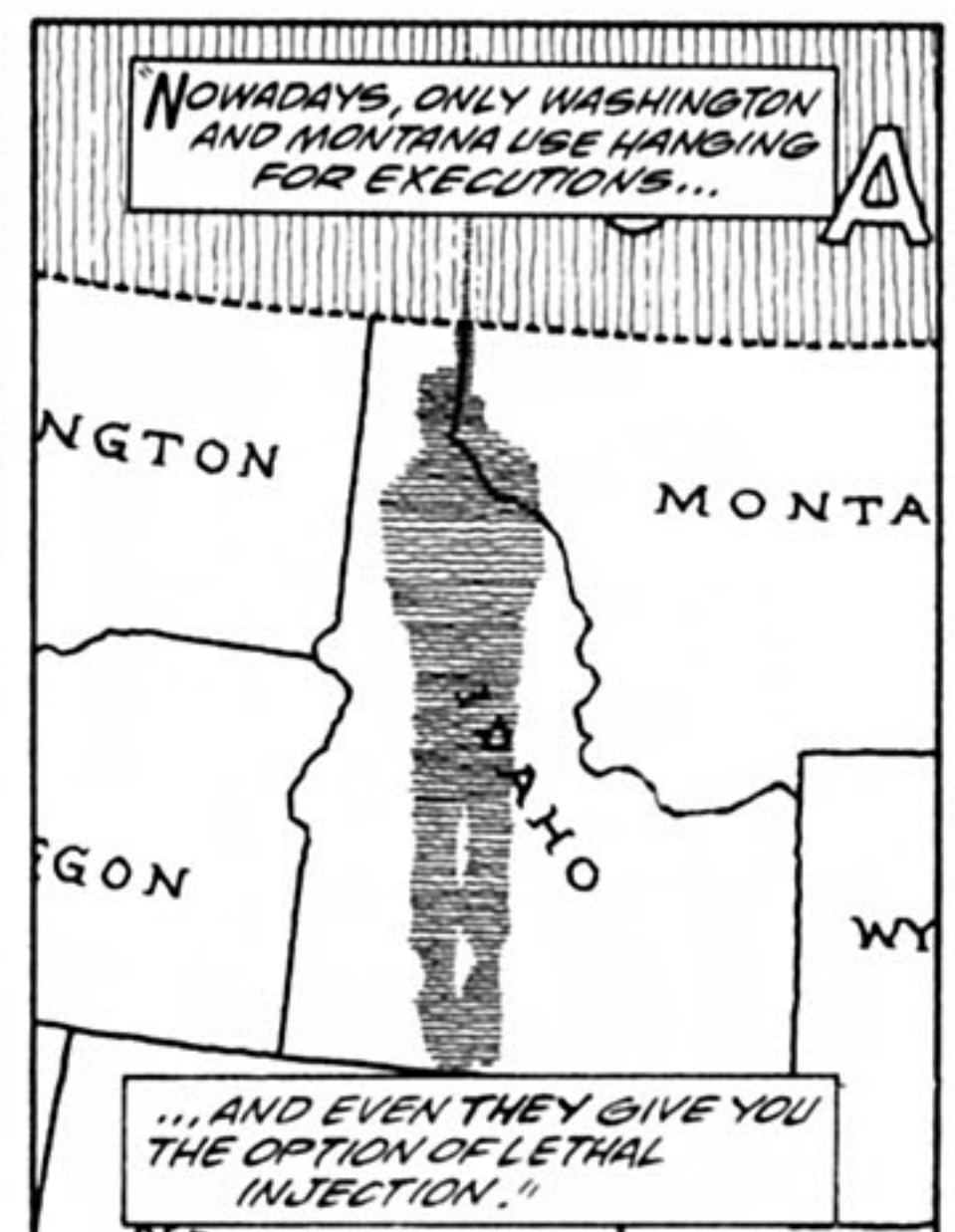
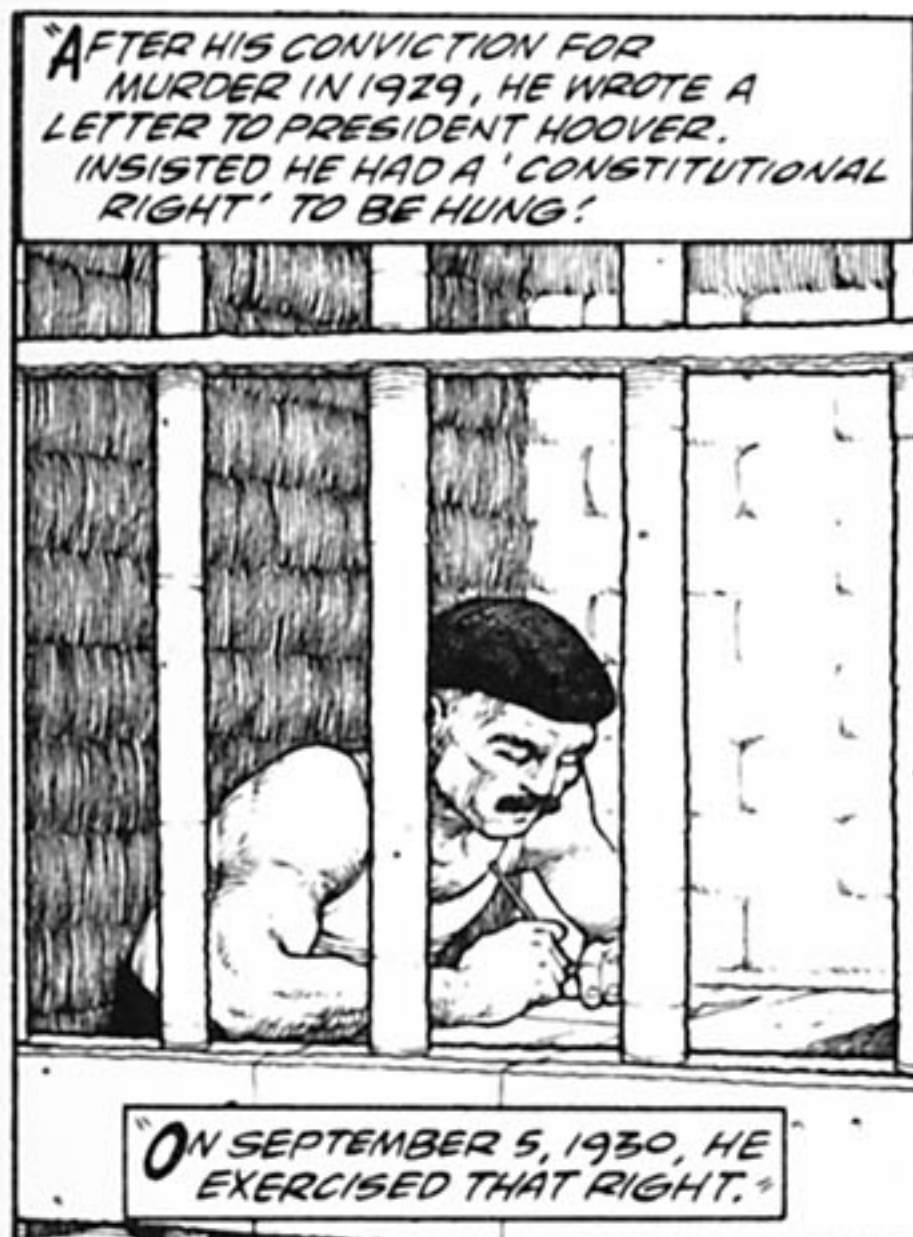
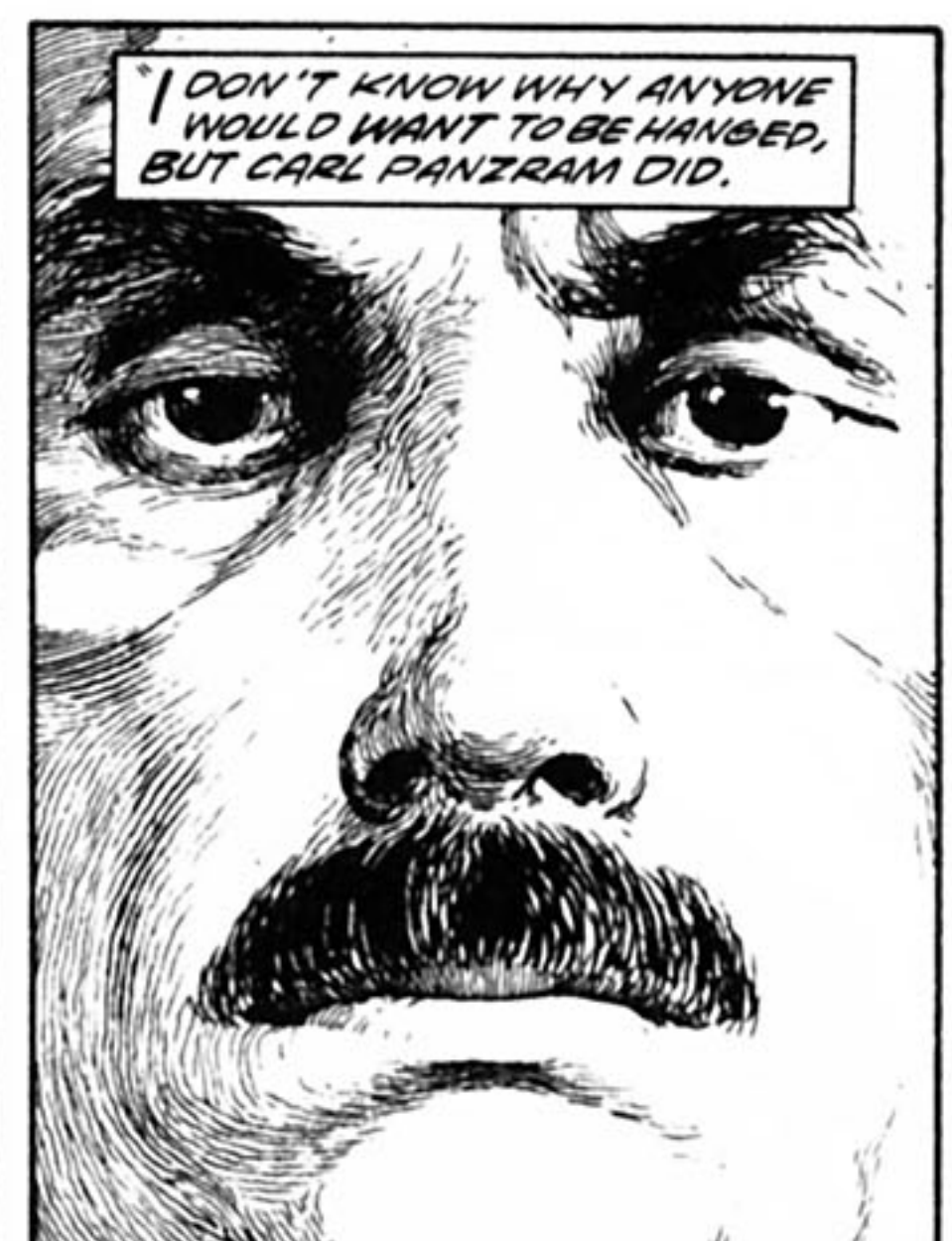


"I RECOLLECT THE HANGING OF BLACK JACK KETCHUM IN 1901!"

LET 'ER RIP!



"THE ROPE WAS TOO LONG, AND SHE RIPPED ALL RIGHT-- RIPPED JACK'S HEAD CLEAN OFF!"







THEY GOT 5
RIFLEMEN
JUST 20 FEET
AWAY FROM
YA.



FOUR OF THE GUNS
GET REAL BULLETS...

...BUT ONE'S
GOT A BLANK.



THAT WAY THEY
CAN ALL THINK
MAYBE THEY'RE
THE ONE THAT DIDN'T
KILL NOBODY
--THE WIMPS!

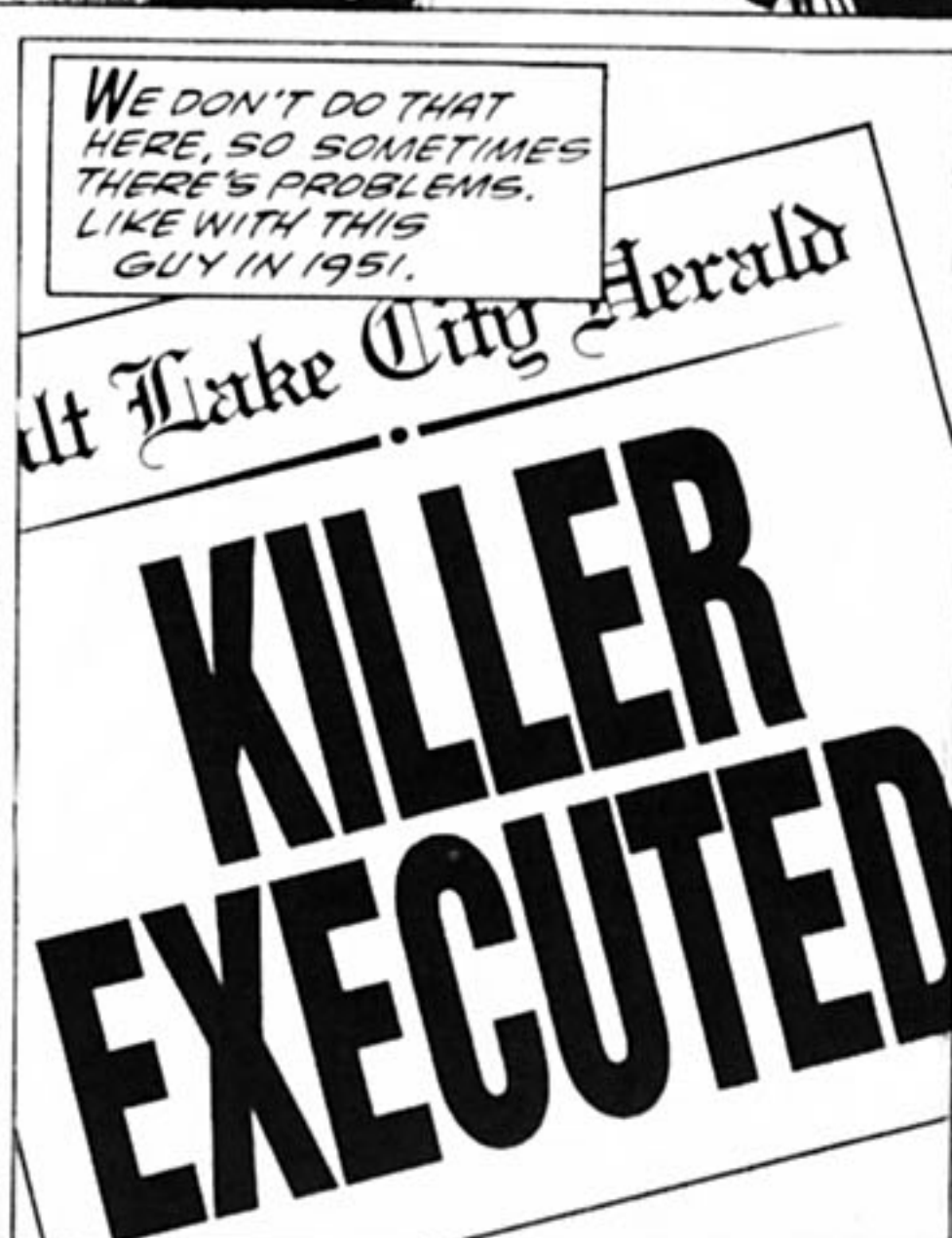


IF ALL 4 BULLETS GO
THROUGH THE HEART
AT ONCE, YOU DIE QUICK.

THEY SAY IT
DOESN'T HURT.



IN OTHER
COUNTRIES
THEY SHOOT A
BULLET THROUGH
YOUR HEAD, TOO--
JUST TO MAKE
SURE.



WE DON'T DO THAT
HERE, SO SOMETIMES
THERE'S PROBLEMS.
LIKE WITH THIS
GUY IN 1951.

Salt Lake City Herald
**KILLER
EXECUTED**



ALL 4 SHOTS
HIT HIM...

...BUT NOT ONE
THROUGH
THE HEART.



THE POOR SONOFABITCH
BLED TO DEATH.



THE FIRING SQUAD'S
BIG FOR SPIES.

THEY DID MATA HARI
WITH A FIRING SQUAD.



AND THAT LABOR GUY, JOE HILL. HE GOT FRAMED ON A MURDER RAP IN UTAH...
BAD LUCK.



BUT THE BIG ONE, THE ONE EVERYBODY KNOWS, IS GARY GILMORE.



IN APRIL OF '76 HE GOT PAROLED OUT OF THE PEN IN ILLINOIS.



BY JULY, HE WAS DOIN' CRIMES.



TOO BAD HE DID 'EM IN UTAH.



DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY?

YEAH, HE WANTED TO DIE, SO ON JANUARY 17, 1977, HE GOT WHAT HE WANTED.



LET'S DO IT.



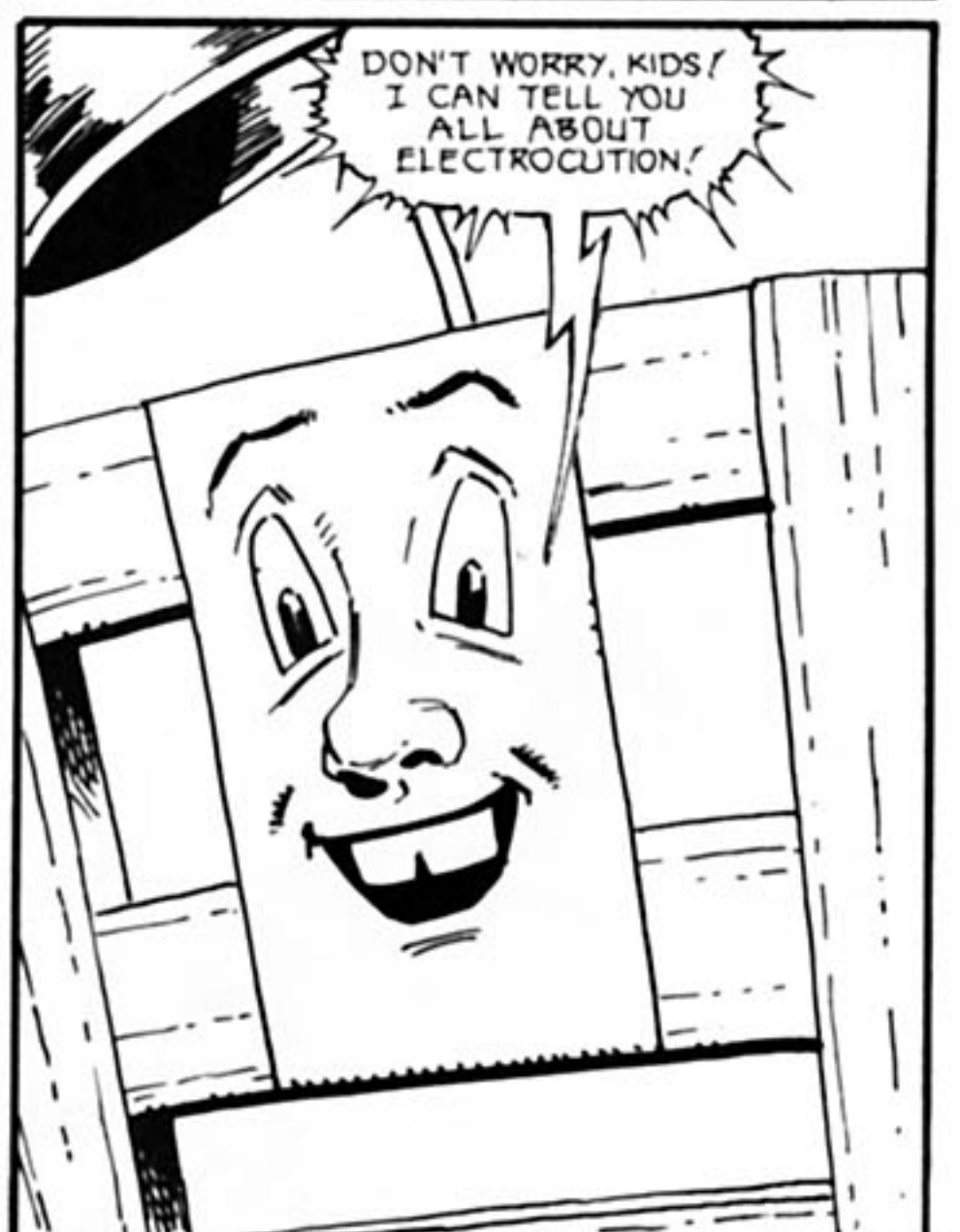
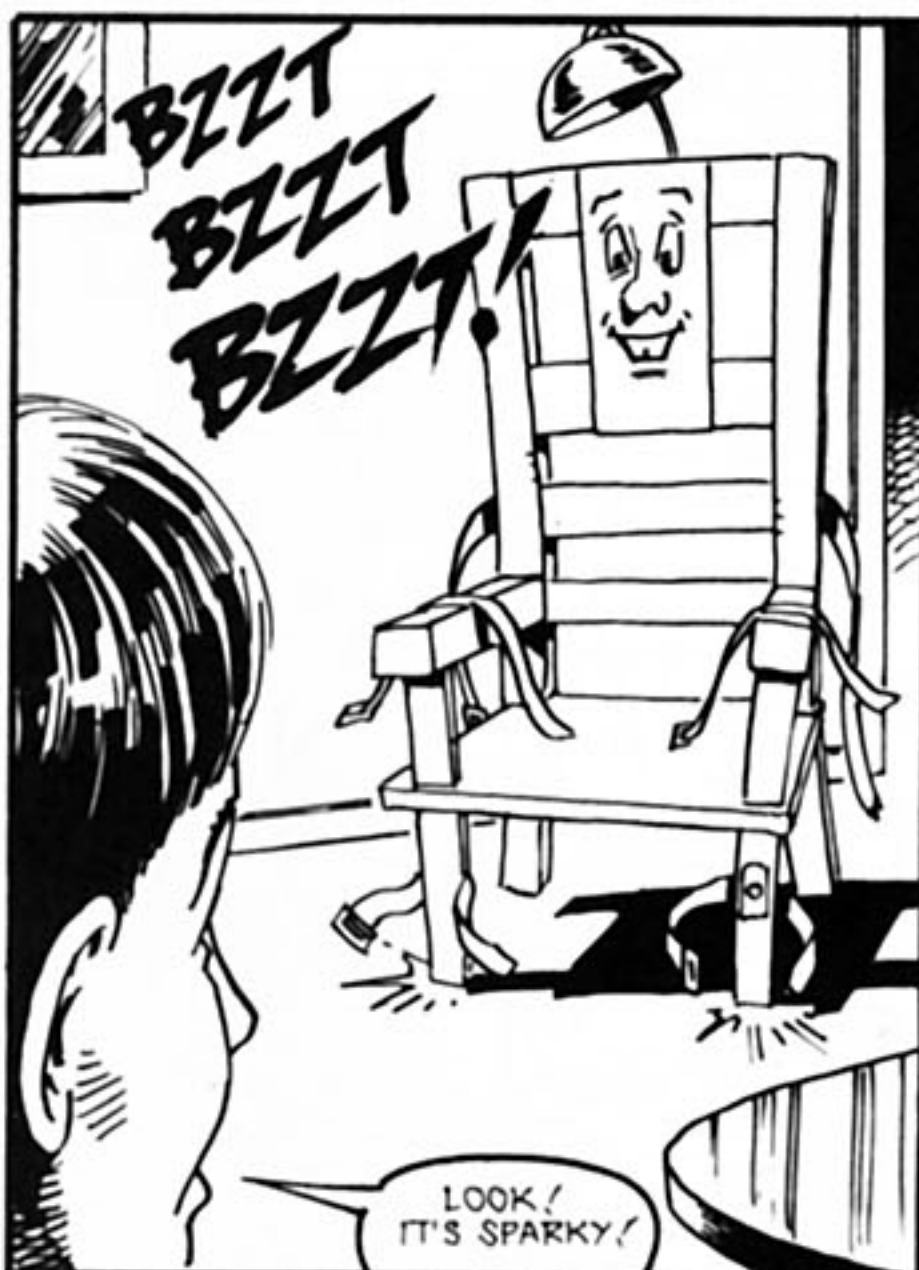
GILMORE WAS THE FIRST PERSON THEY EXECUTED AFTER THE SUPREME COURT LET CAPITAL PUNISHMENT BACK IN, IN 1976.



YEAH, LUCKY FOR ME I'M NOT IN UTAH!



HEY, KIDS! IT'S OLD SPARKY!





"I'M THE MOST POPULAR FORM OF EXECUTION AROUND! SINCE CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WAS RE-STORED IN 1976, ALMOST 100 PEOPLE HAVE DIED IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!"



"14 STATES USE THE ELECTRIC CHAIR TO KILL PEOPLE!"



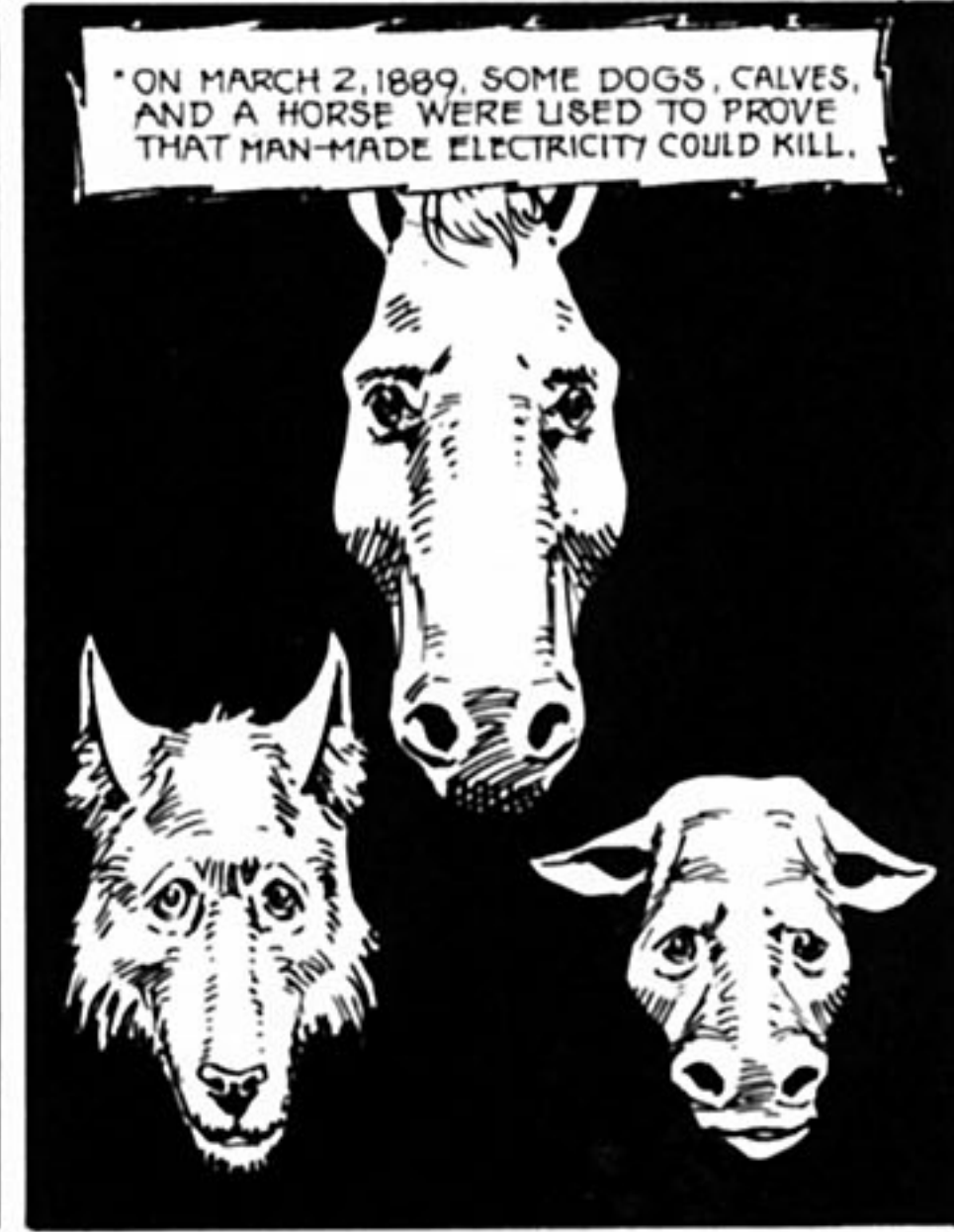
GOSH, SPARKY, WERE YOU ALWAYS SO POPULAR?



"NO, JIMMY! WHY, IN THE OLD DAYS, I DIDN'T EVEN EXIST!"



"THE FIRST ELECTROCUTIONS WERE VERY PRIMITIVE, AND THE FIRST SUBJECTS WEREN'T EVEN PEOPLE!"



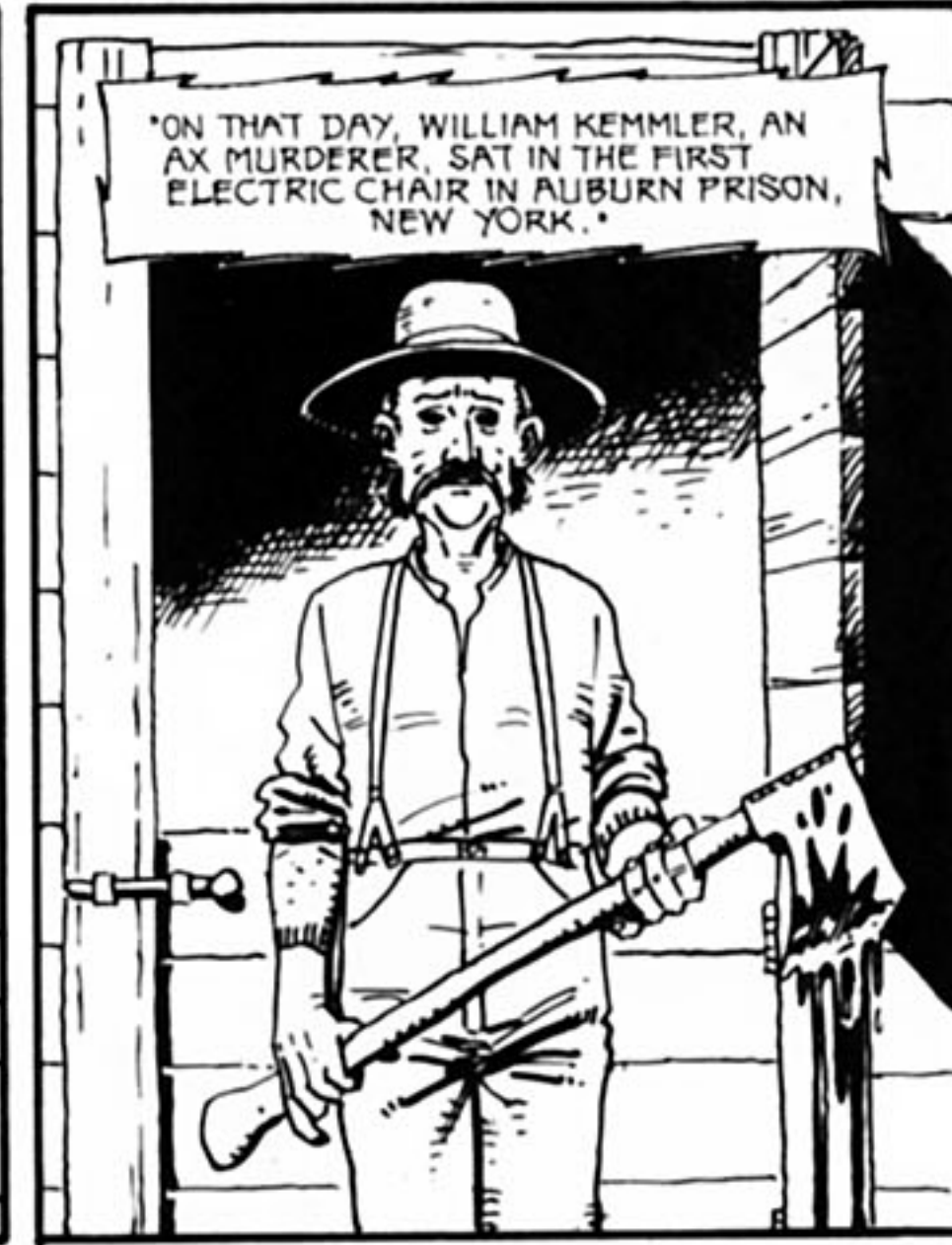
"ON MARCH 2, 1889, SOME DOGS, CALVES, AND A HORSE WERE USED TO PROVE THAT MAN-MADE ELECTRICITY COULD KILL."



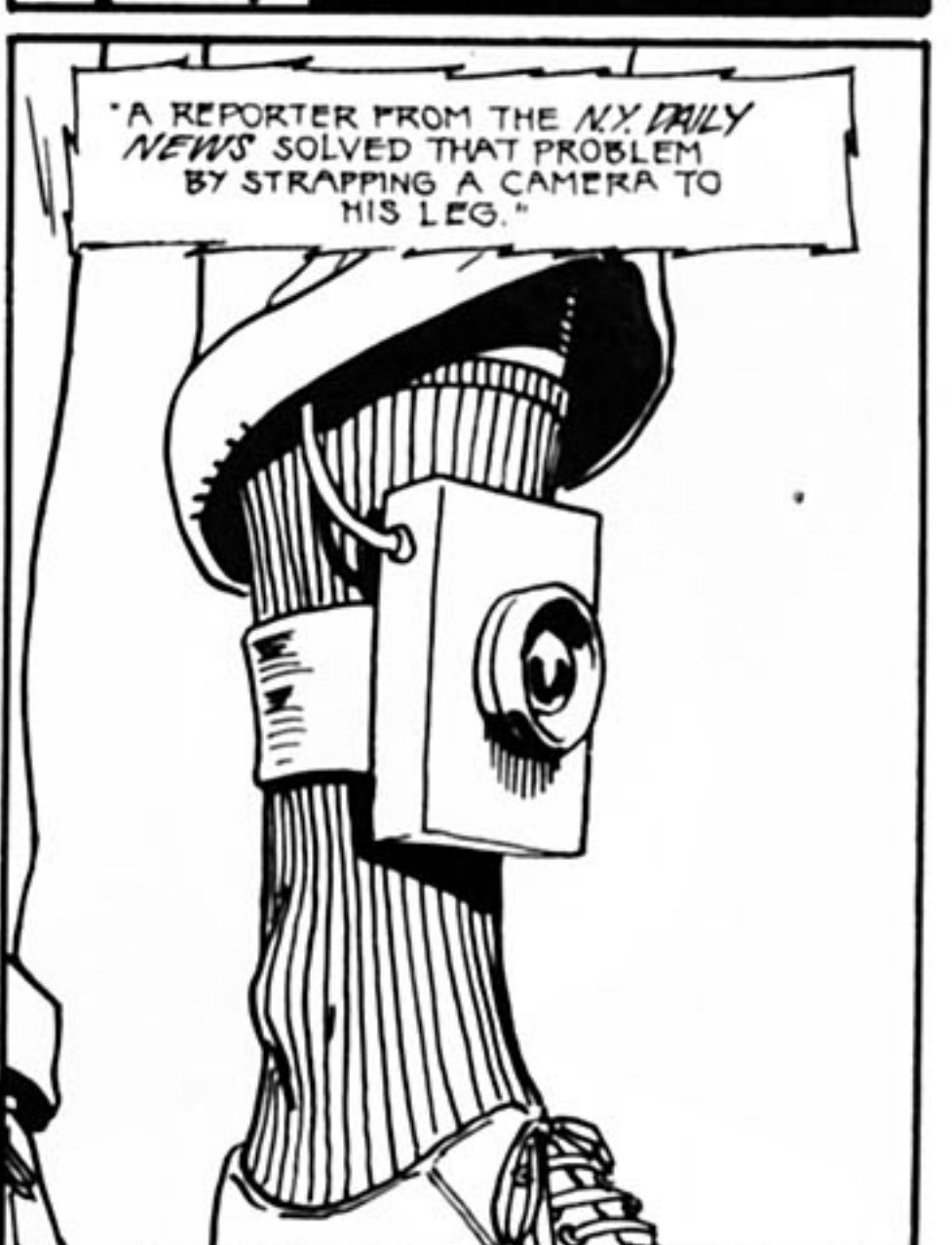
"THANKS TO OUR ANIMAL FRIENDS, REAL PROGRESS WAS MADE!"

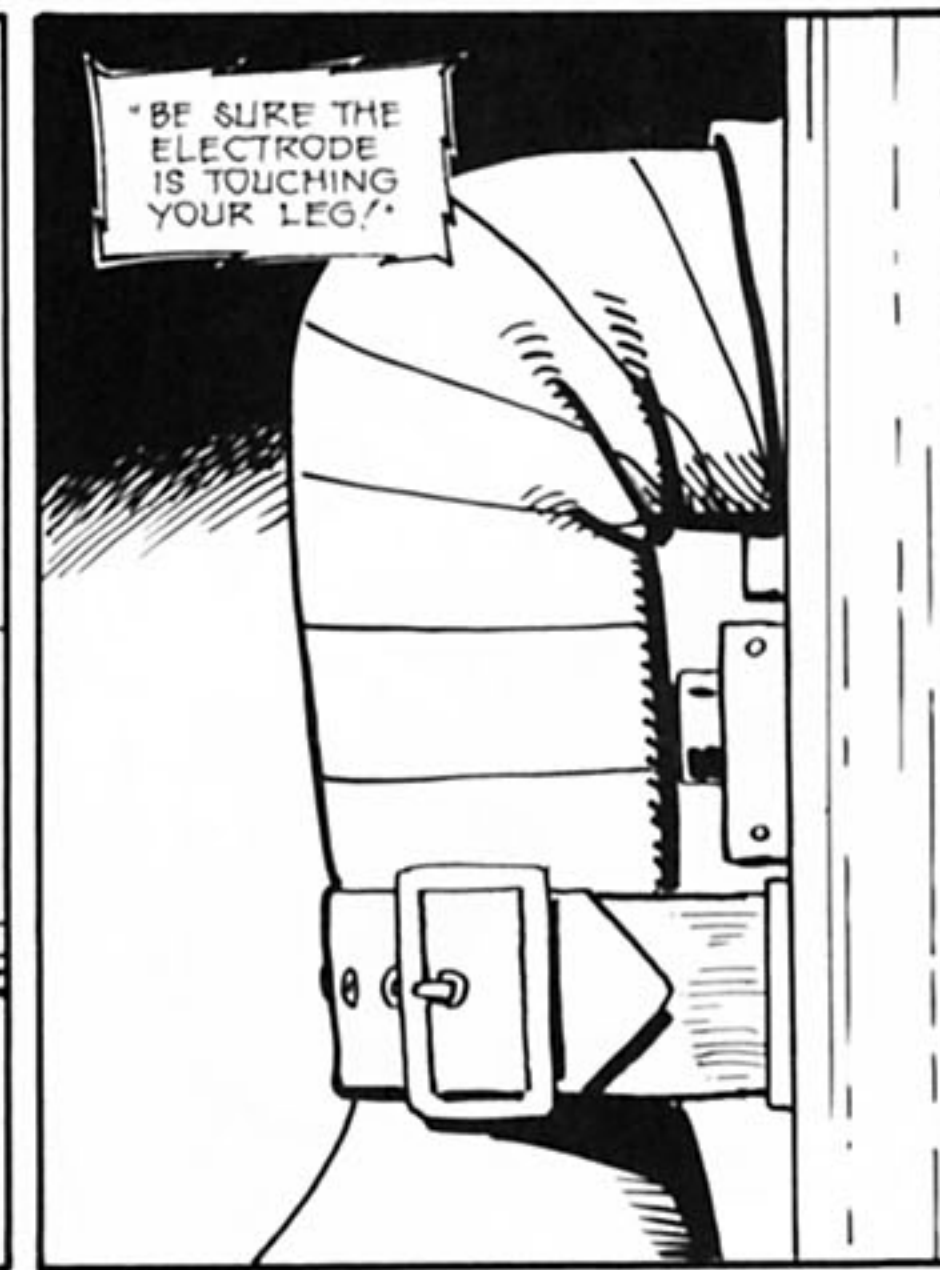
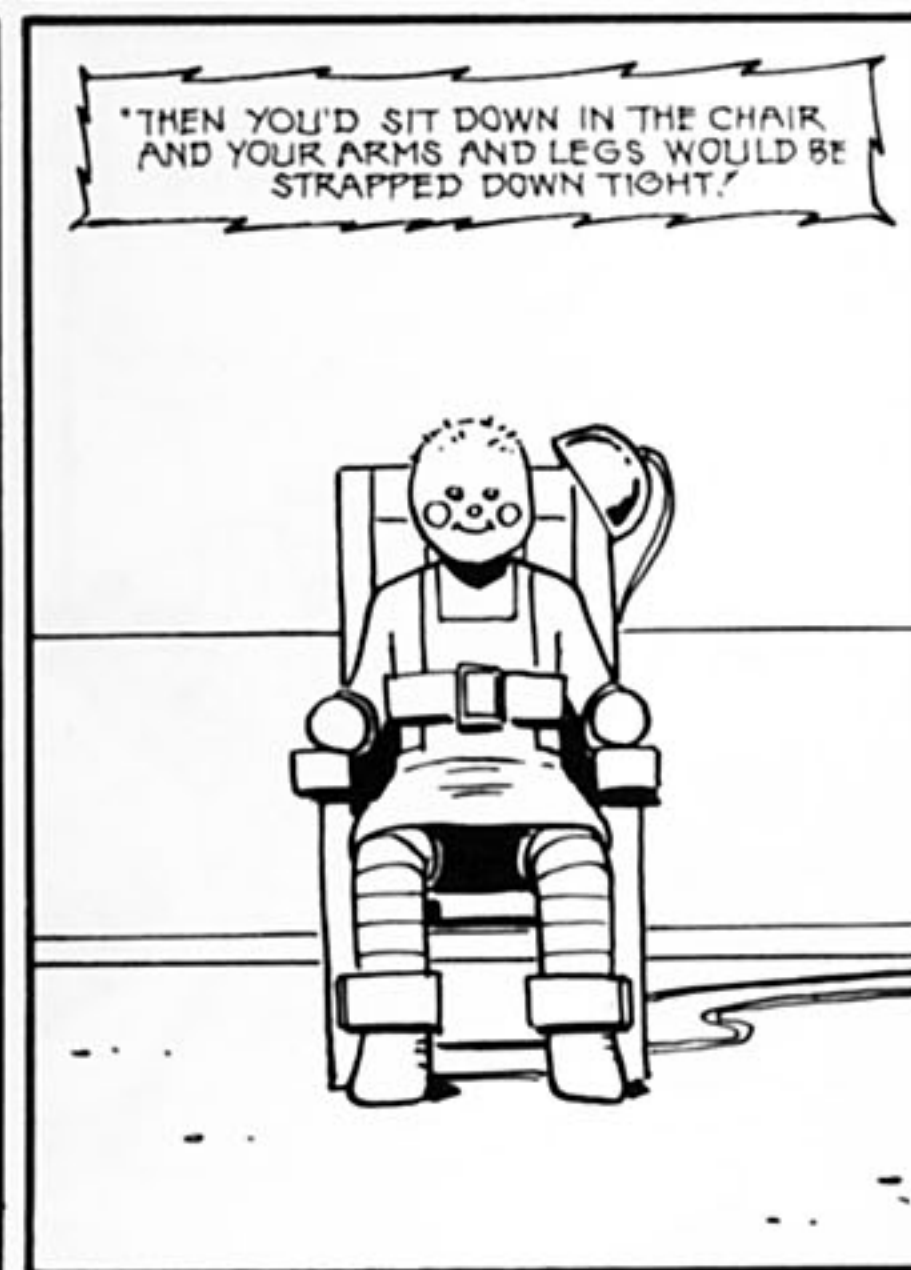
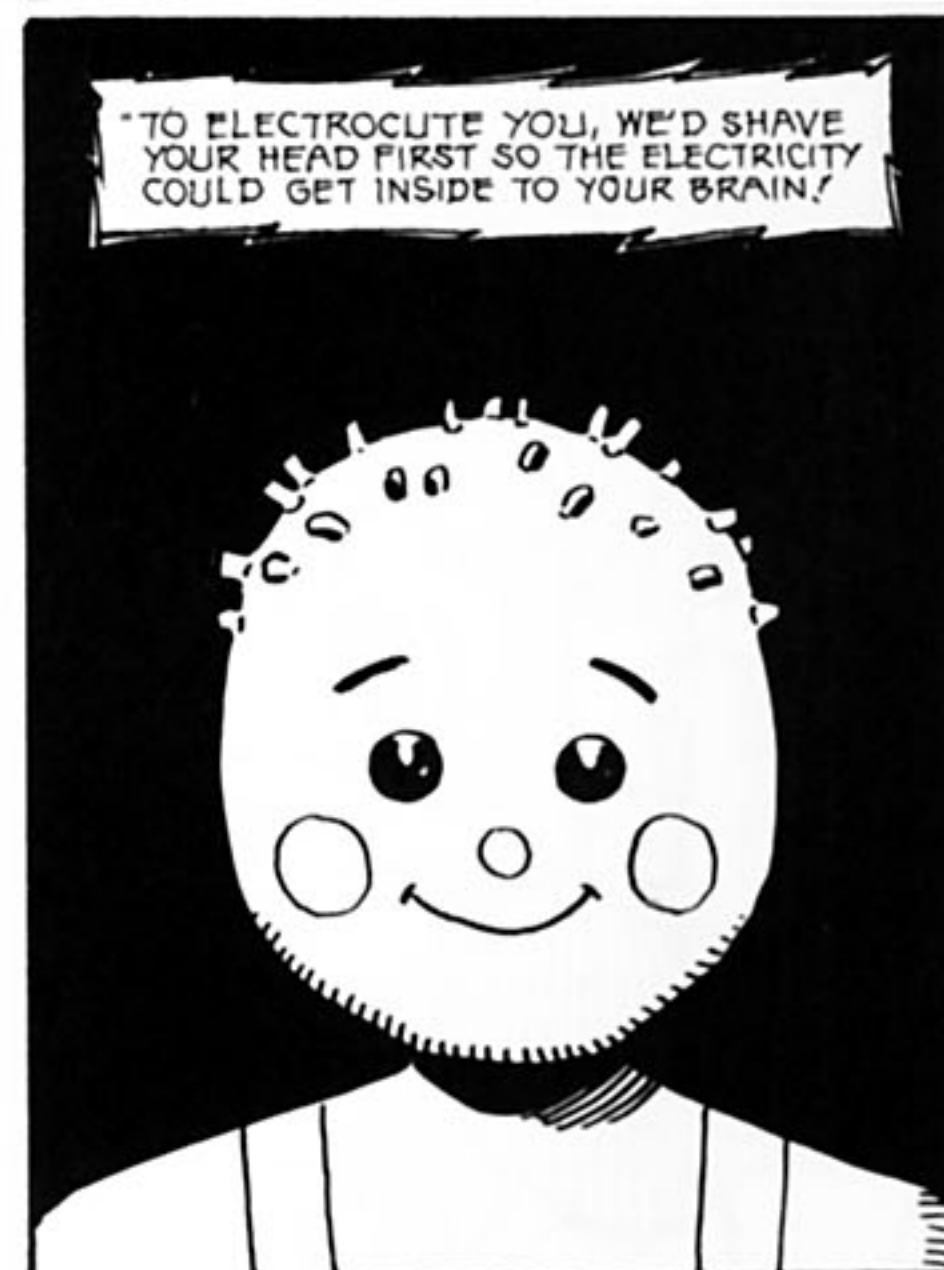
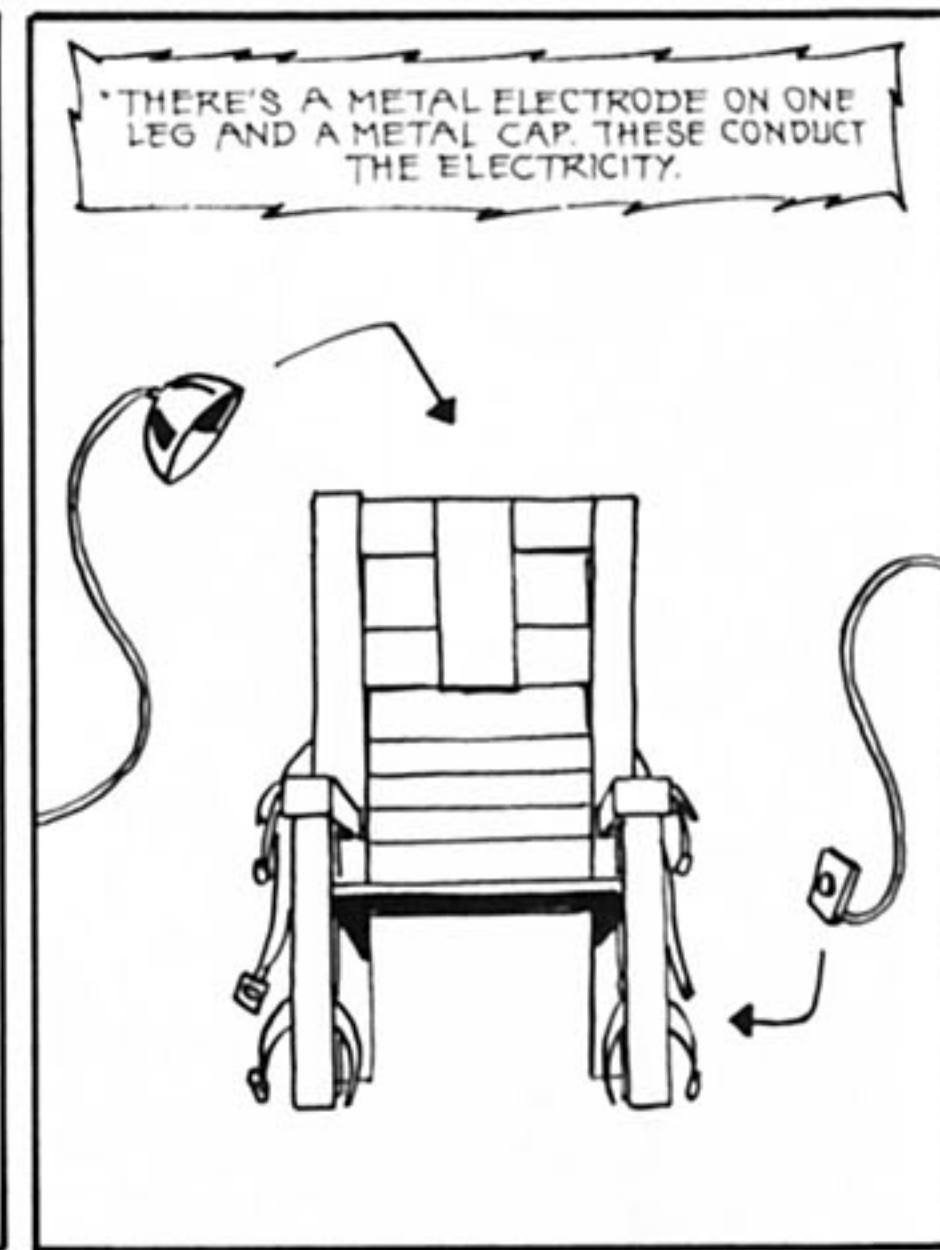
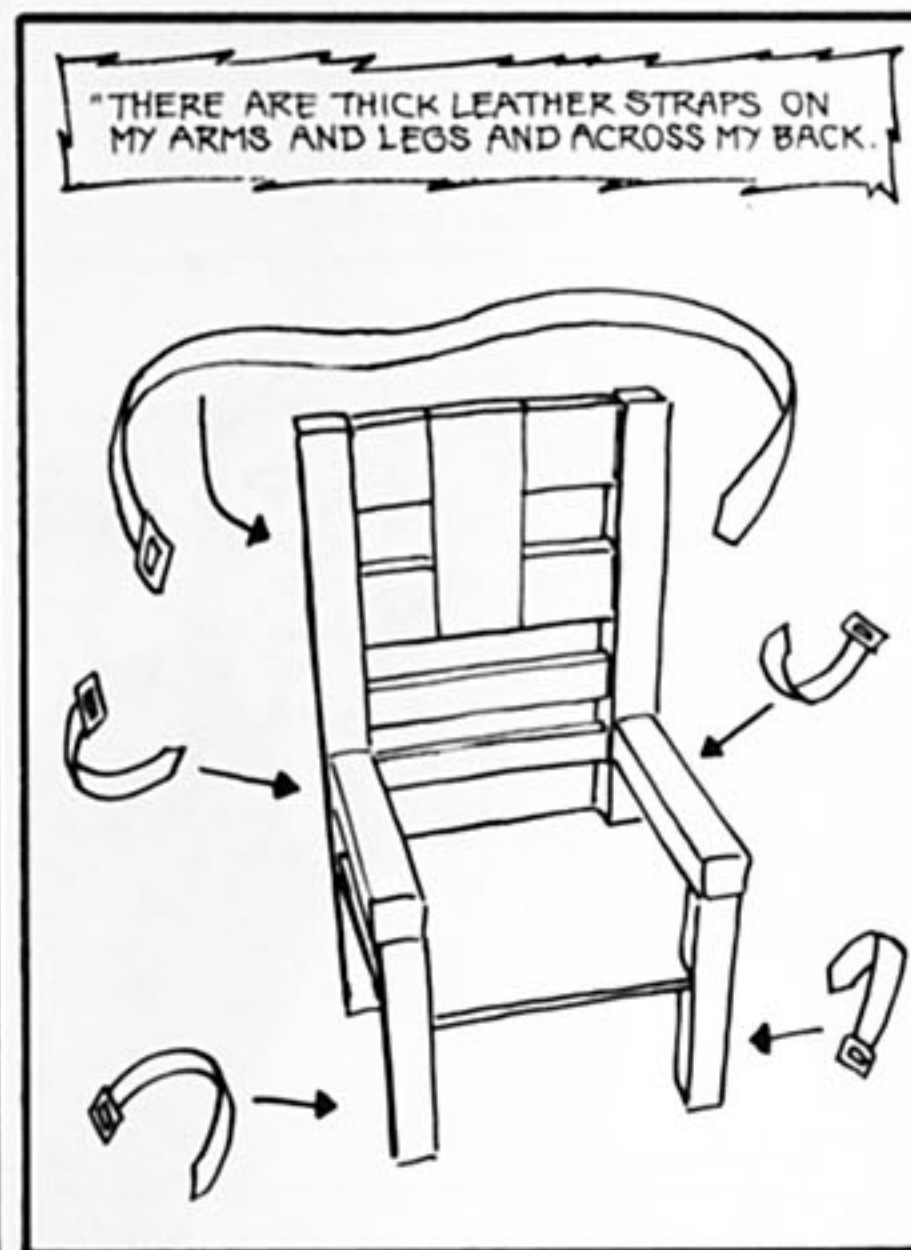
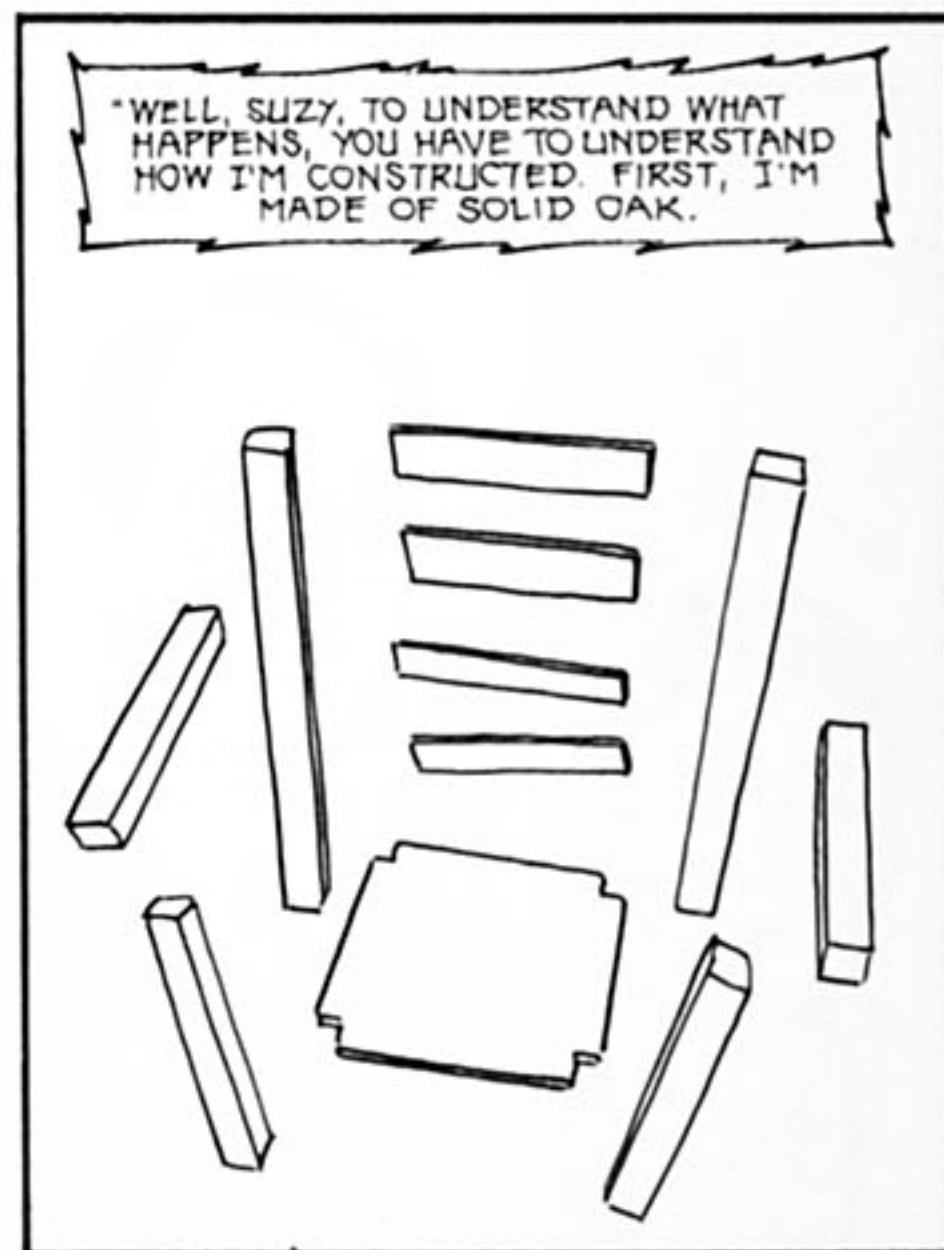


THE FIRST HUMAN ELECTROCUTION WAS ON AUGUST 6, 1890.



"ON THAT DAY, WILLIAM KEMMLER, AN AX MURDERER, SAT IN THE FIRST ELECTRIC CHAIR IN AUBURN PRISON, NEW YORK."





"THE METAL SKULLCAP FITS SNUGLY
ON YOUR HEAD."

"DON'T WORRY! THEY'LL PUT A LEATHER STRAP ACROSS YOUR EYES TO KEEP THEM FROM POPPING!"



A black and white line drawing of a hand flipping a switch on a control panel. Above the panel, a banner reads: "WHEN YOU'RE ALL READY, THE EXECUTIONER THROWS THE SWITCH AND..."



* THE FIRST CHARGE IS 2500 VOLTS
STRAIGHT INTO YOUR BRAIN!

* YOUR BRAIN FRIES — IN FACT,
IT ALMOST BOILS!

* THE FIRST CHARGE IS 2500 VOLTS
STRAIGHT INTO YOUR BRAIN!

* YOUR BRAIN FRIES — IN FACT,
IT ALMOST BOILS!



"THE SECOND CHARGE OF 1000 VOLTS DISRUPTS THE ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT IN YOUR HEART."

"YOUR HEART STOPS BEATING!"

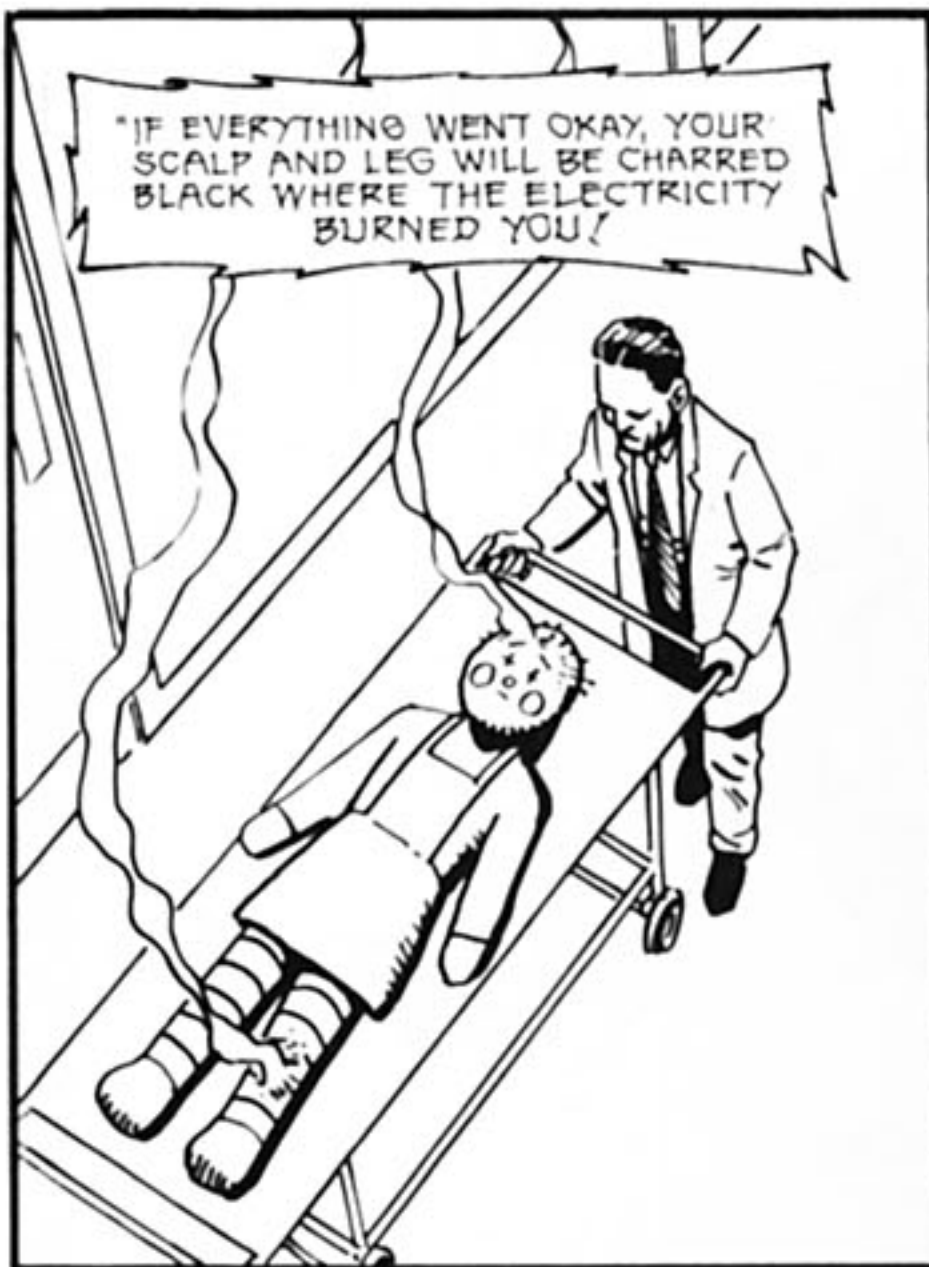
"THE SECOND CHARGE OF 1000 VOLTS DISRUPTS THE ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT IN YOUR HEART."

"YOUR HEART STOPS BEATING!"

"USUALLY THERE'S A THIRD OR EVEN A FOURTH CHARGE TO MAKE SURE THE JOB'S DONE RIGHT!"



" THEN A DOCTOR CHECKS TO MAKE SURE YOU'RE DEAD."





DEATH BY GAS HAS A LONG AND HONORABLE HISTORY.



THE GERMANS INTRODUCED GAS WARFARE IN 1915, AND IT WAS THE HIT OF WORLD WAR I.

PRETTY SOON EVERYBODY WAS KILLING WITH GAS.



WHILE IT WASN'T USED ON THE BATTLEFIELDS IN WORLD WAR II, THE NAZIS KILLED MILLIONS WITH GAS.



NOWADAYS, GAS WARFARE IS BANNED BY INTERNATIONAL TREATY. BUT SIX STATES STILL USE GAS FOR CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.



AND GAS IS ECONOMICAL. THE GAS CHAMBER HAS TWO CHAIRS, SO TWO CRIMINALS CAN BE EXECUTED AT ONCE.

ARE YOU COMFY, SWEETIE?

JUST FINE, DEAR.



DEADLY GAS IS RELEASED WHEN CYANIDE PELLETS ARE DROPPED INTO SHALLOW PANS OF SULFURIC ACID MIXED WITH WATER.

ONCE THE EXECUTION PROCEDURE BEGINS IT CAN'T BE STOPPED. IN 1957, THE GOVERNOR OF CALIFORNIA CALLED ABOUT 30 SECONDS TOO LATE TO SAVE BURTON ABBOTT.



THE GAS FUMES RISE QUICKLY, BUT DEATH IS NOT PARTICULARLY FAST.



SOON, THE VICTIMS START GASPING AND WHEEZING LIKE FISH OUT OF WATER.



THEY THRASH AND SCREAM AND CRY.



OFTEN THEY STRUGGLE SO HARD THEY BREAK FREE OF A STRAP.



THEIR FACES TURN PURPLE, THEIR TONGUES STICK OUT, THEY DROOL.

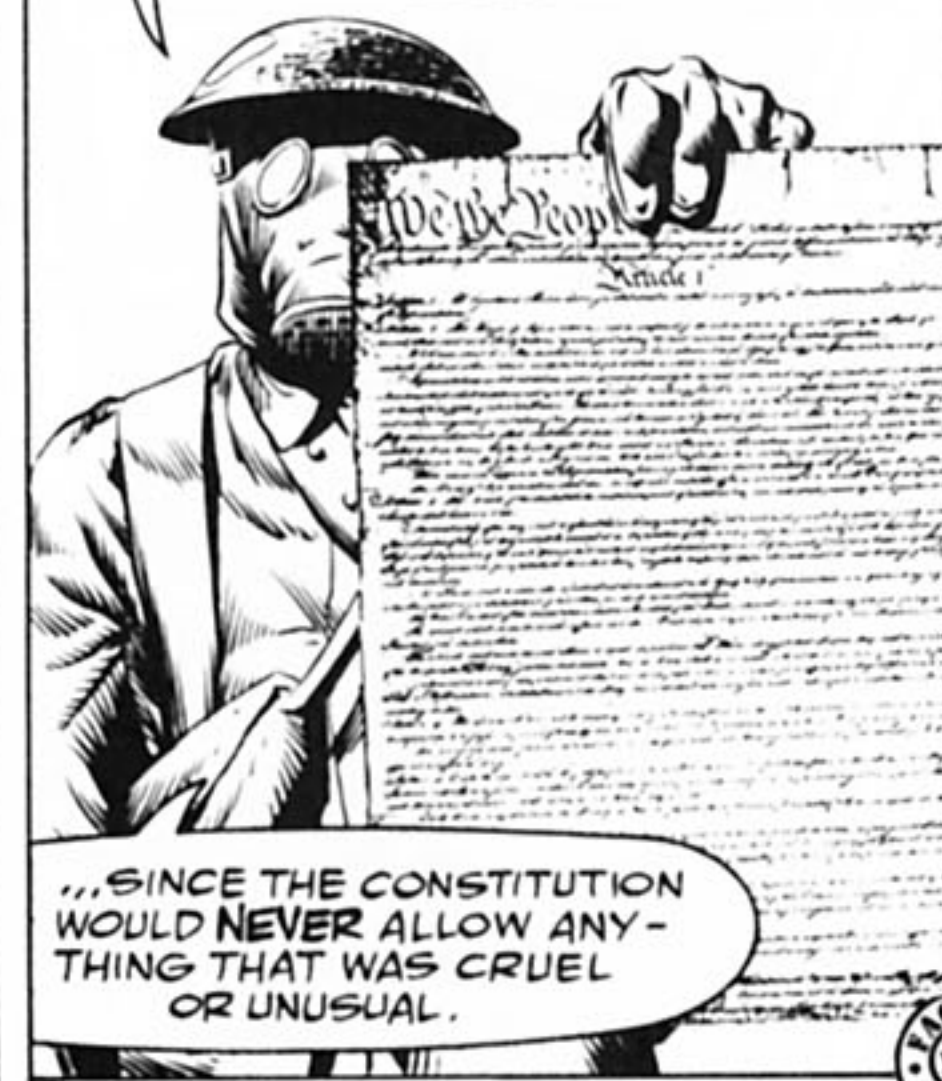


TEN MINUTES! WELL, ASPHYXIATION IS SLOW BUT SURE.

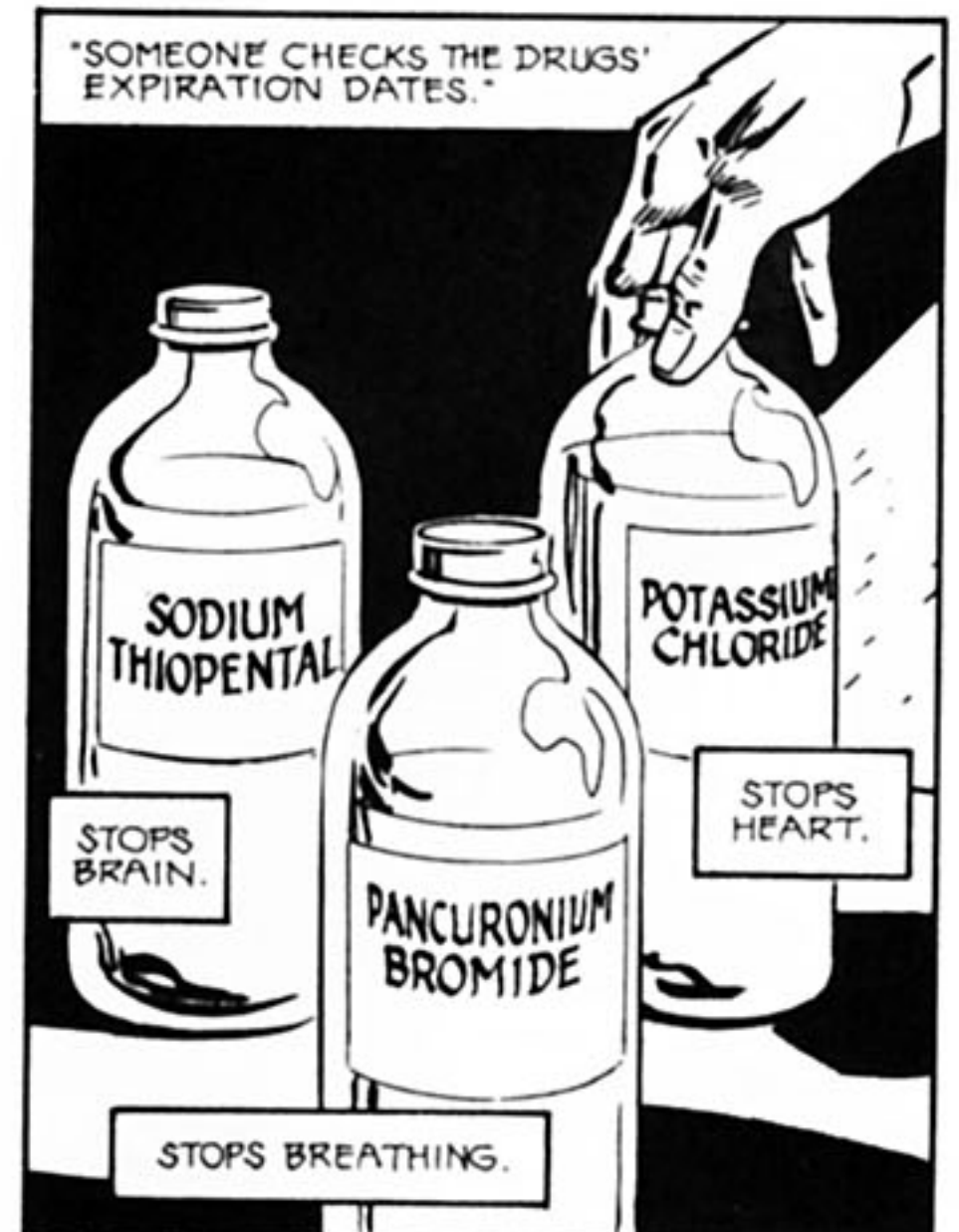
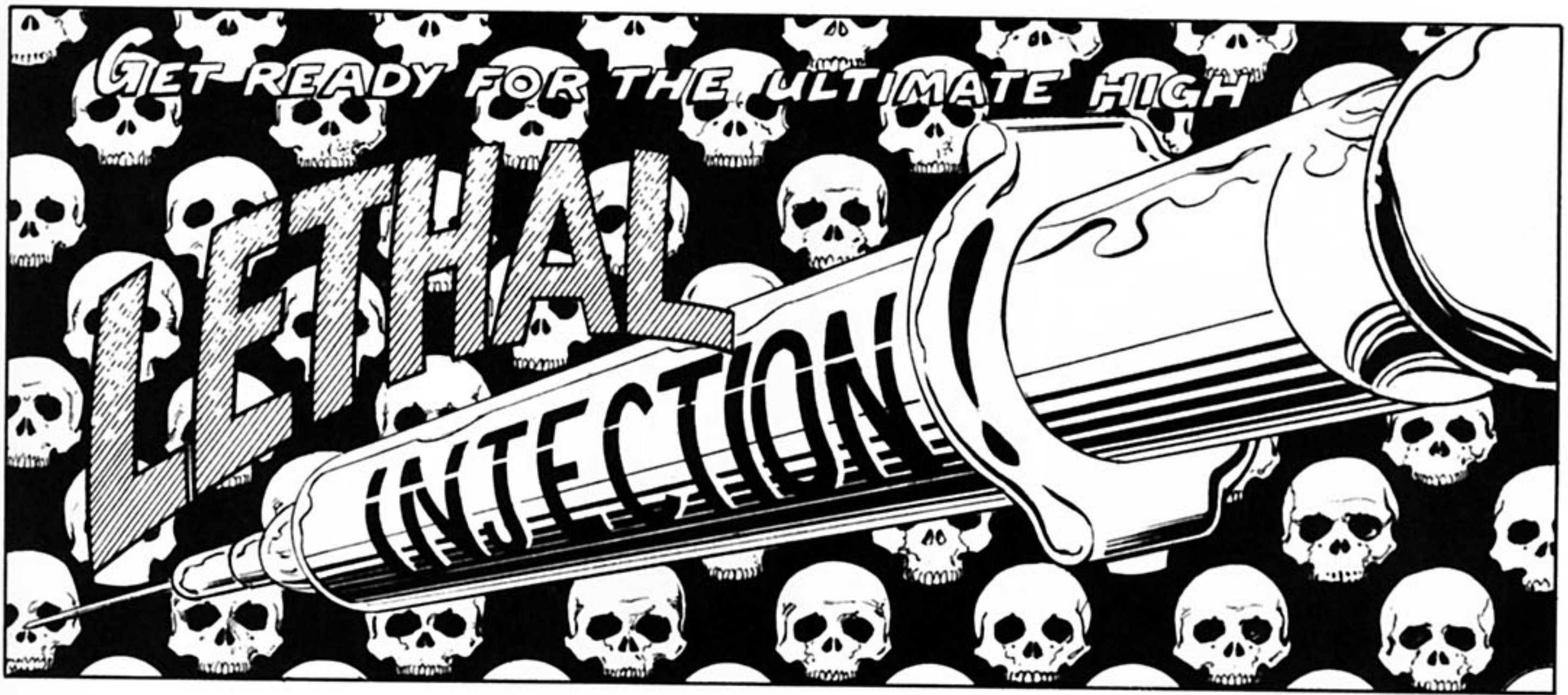


WITNESSES MAY FIND THIS METHOD OF EXECUTION TO BE SOMEWHAT DISTRESSING.

BUT WE CAN REST ASSURED THAT THE GAS CHAMBER IS A HUMANE METHOD OF PUNISHMENT...



...SINCE THE CONSTITUTION WOULD NEVER ALLOW ANYTHING THAT WAS CRUEL OR UNUSUAL.









IT IS LUCKY ZE
GOVERNEUR HAS
GIVEN HIM ZE LAST-
MINUTE REPRIEVE!

I WOULD NOT
LIKE TO PREPARE
HIS LAST MEAL, NO?

CHAPTER TWO

NEVER SAY DIE

HOMICIDE AND SUICIDE

Homicide and suicide may seem to be exactly opposite methods of death, yet they're very much alike in what they leave behind: a dead body, sure, but also a lot of questions and, often, a certain amount of anger. The main question, in both cases, is always "Why?" *Why* does one man beat another to death over a can of soda (*page 36*)? *Why* do postal employees so often go berserk and become mass murderers (*page 40*)? *Why* do some teenagers choose the suicide "solution" to their typical adolescent problems (*page 47*)? The anger, of course, is inherent in the question — so many of these deaths seem completely senseless. In fact, there *isn't* any answer, they *are* inexplicable — and that's just what makes them fascinating. As Nancy Kerrigan so eloquently put it: **WHY?**



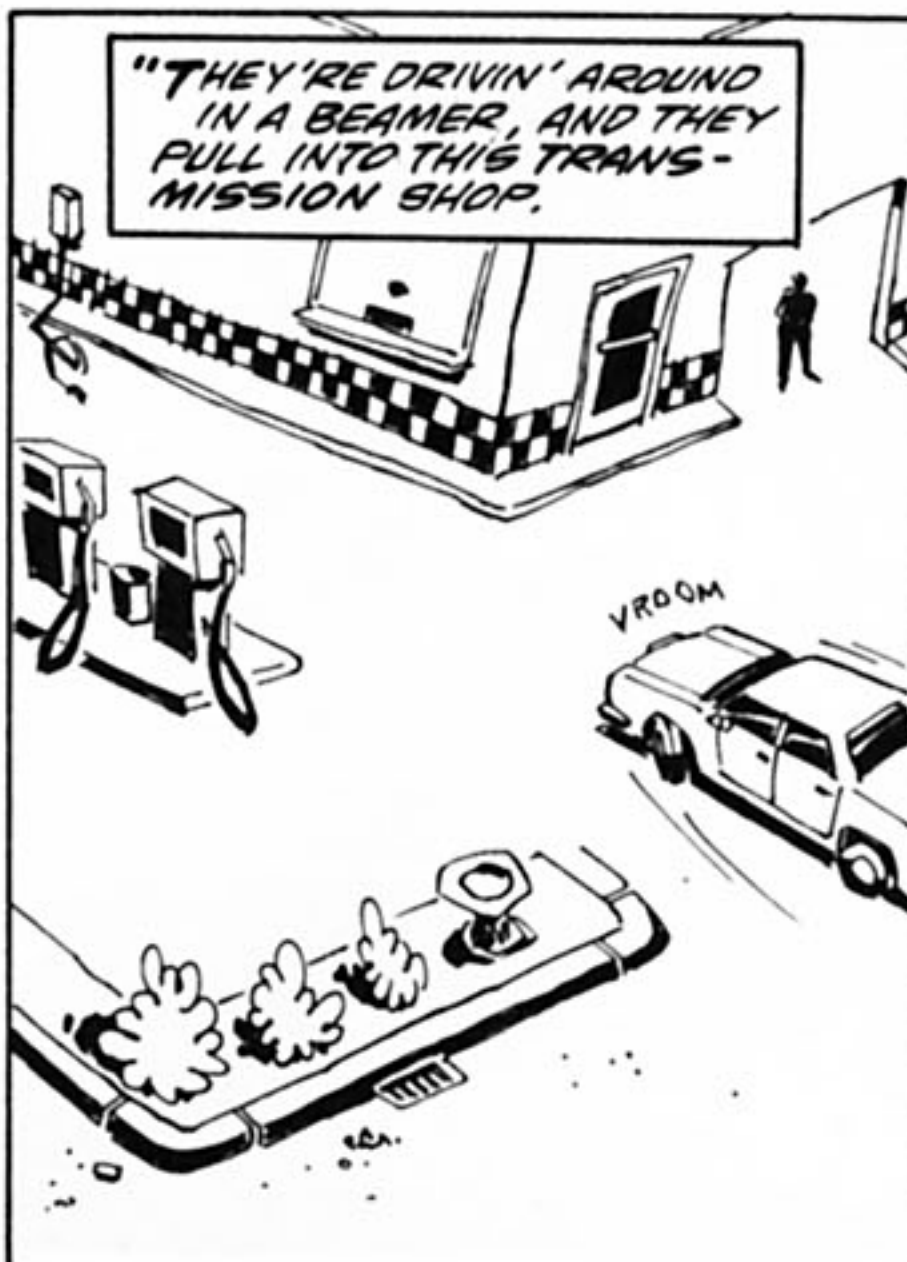




"HEY, YOU THINK THAT'S SOMETHING--THERE WERE THESE THREE GUYS UP IN QUEENS..."



"THEY'RE DRIVIN' AROUND IN A BEAMER, AND THEY PULL INTO THIS TRANSMISSION SHOP."



"SO, THEY ASK THE MECHANIC TO FIX THE WHEELS ON THEIR BMW AND HE SAYS..."

WE'RE A TRANSMISSION SHOP, WE DON'T DO WHEELS.



SO THEY SHOT HIM DEAD!



BUT SERIOUSLY, FOLKS, IT'S NOT JUST NEW YORK WHERE THIS STUFF HAPPENS.



"IN BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA, TWO GIRLS WERE PLAYING WITH SQUIRT GUNS, AND ONE ACCIDENTALLY SHOT A BOY IN THE FACE."



"SO THE BOY SHOT BACK-- BUT HIS GUN WAS REAL! AND HE KILLED HER! NOW THERE'S A STUPID MURDER!"



HEY, YOU'VE BEEN A GREAT AUDIENCE! THANKS! GOOD NIGHT!



MAN, THAT GUY KILLS ME!

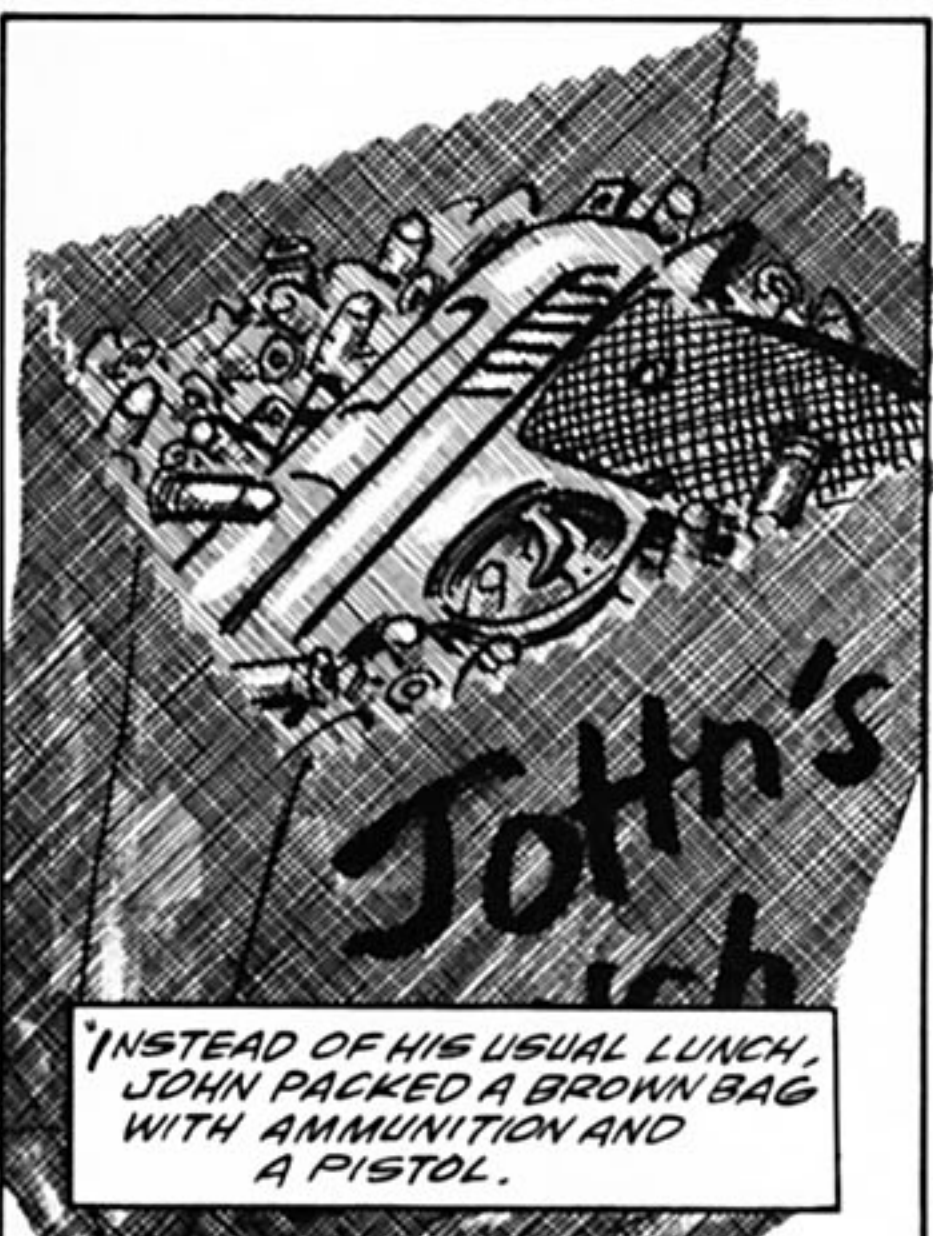
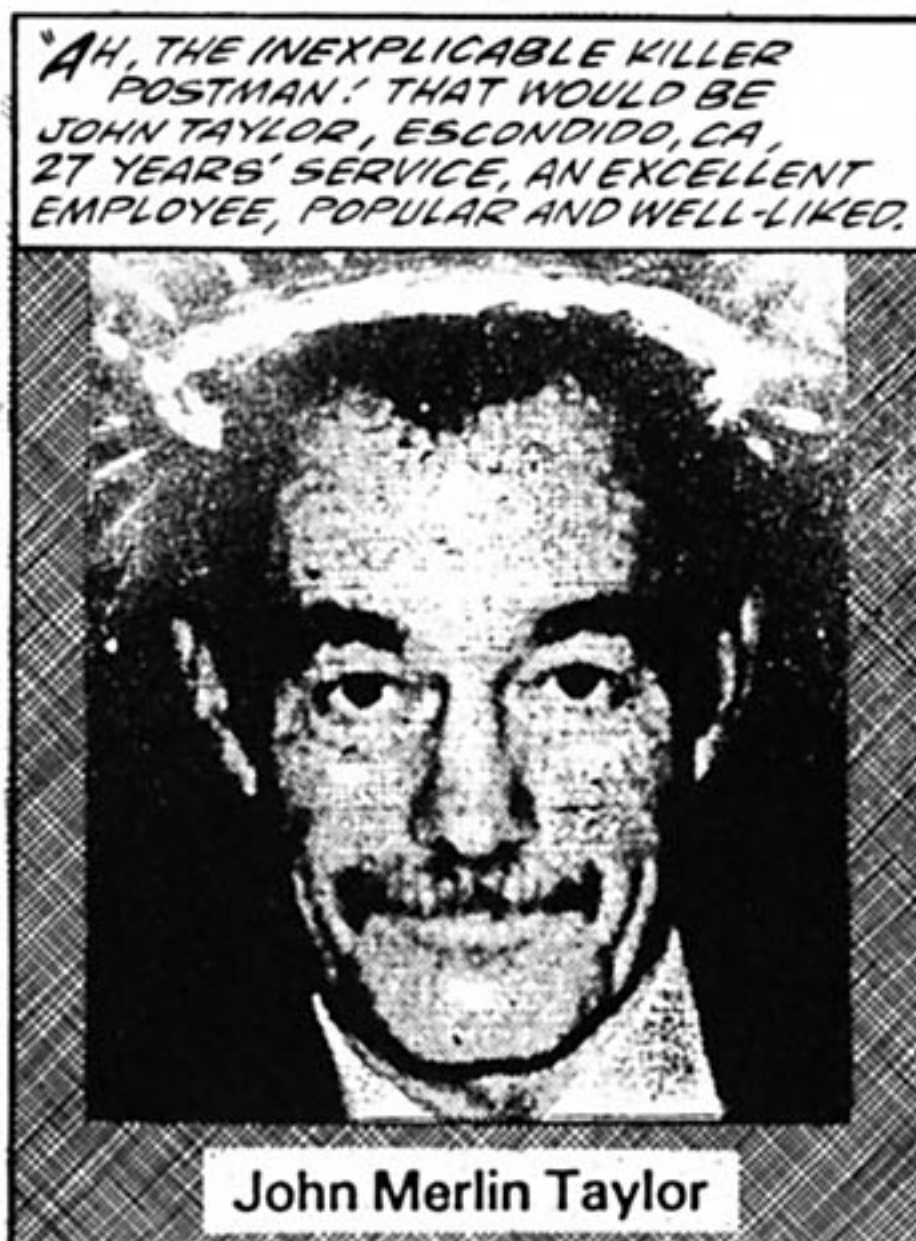




LOOK OUT!

IT'S THE
KILLER
POSTALMENT







experience--
The **THRILL** of AGONY--
--The **VIOLENCE** of TV in
THE WIDE WORLD OF
Death!!





THIS GRUESOME
TAPE WAS BROADCAST
AS "NEWS."



A TAPE OF
THE BUD
BROADCASTS
IS A SURE-
FIRE HIT AT
PARTIES.



IT SEEMS QUIANT NOW, BUT TV
REPORTERS USED TO WORRY ABOUT
TREATING MEANINGLESS EVENTS AS
IF THEY WERE NEWS.

HOW WOULD
YOU LIKE TO
SEE SOMEONE
BURN?



IN 1983, CECIL ANDREWS,
AN UNEMPLOYED
ROOFER, CALLED THE
LOCAL TV STATION IN
ANNISTON, ALABAMA
AND ASKED IF
THEY'D LIKE TO
TAPE SOMEONE
SETTING HIMSELF
ON FIRE.

A CAMERA
CREW WENT
RIGHT OVER.



THE CREW
TAPED WHILE
CECIL SPLASHED
LIGHTER FLUID
ON HIMSELF
AND HELD A
MATCH TO HIS
CHEST. THE
MATCH WENT
OUT.



CECIL PUT A
MATCH TO HIS
LEG. THE MATCH
WENT OUT. THE
CREW KEPT
TAPING.



ON HIS THIRD TRY,
CECIL LIT UP. AFTER
37 SECONDS, THE CREW
STOPPED TAPING AND
HELPED PUT OUT THE
FIRE.



JOURNALISTS EVERYWHERE WERE
APPALLED AT WHMA FOR TAPING
CECIL'S SUICIDE ATTEMPT INSTEAD
OF TRYING TO STOP HIM.

ALL THREE MAJOR NETWORKS
BROADCAST THE TAPE WHILE
THEY DISCUSSED HOW APPALLED
THEY WERE.

SOMETIMES A PUBLIC DEATH HELPS TO MAKE A POINT. NORMAN MORRISON SET HIMSELF ON FIRE OUTSIDE THE PENTAGON IN 1965 TO PROTEST THE VIETNAM WAR.



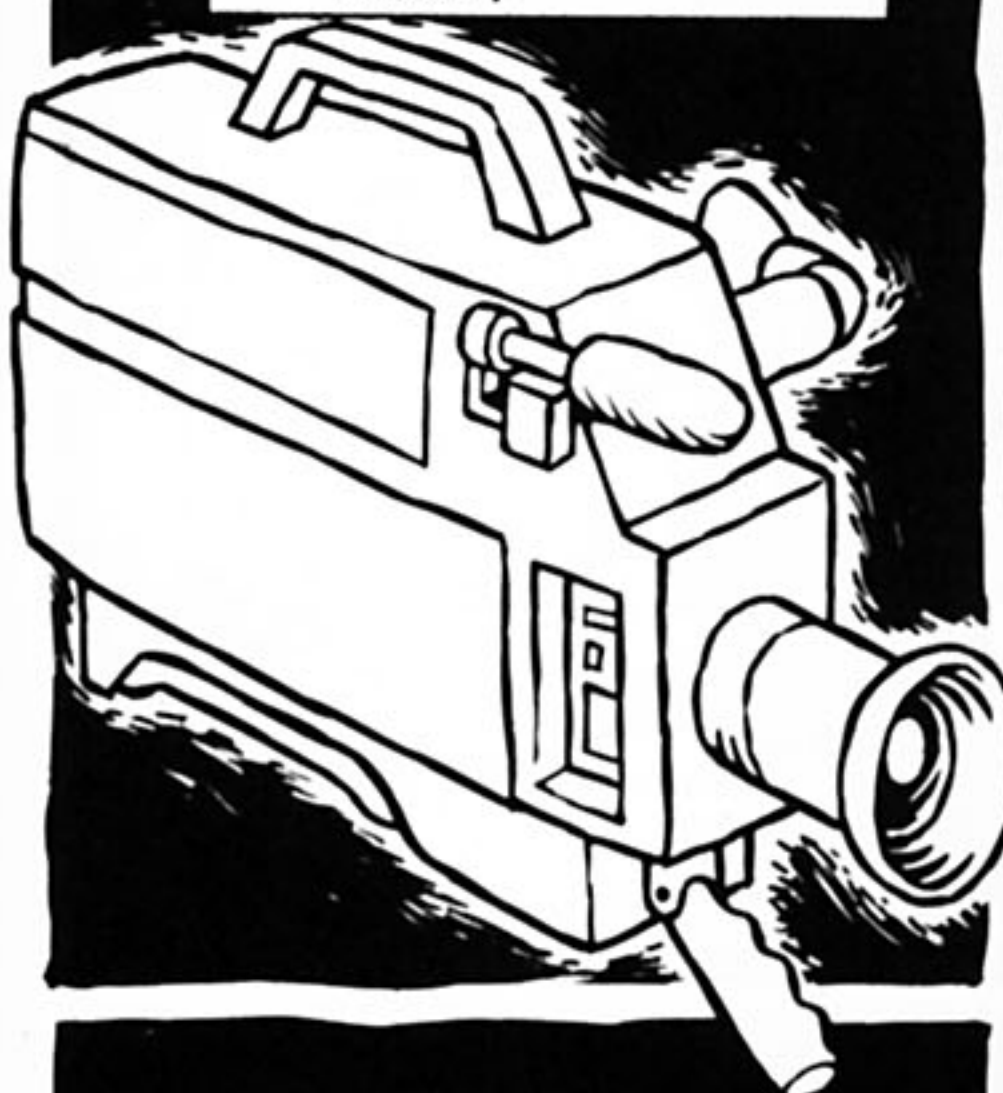
SO DID A NUMBER OF BUDDHIST MONKS IN SAIGON.



OF COURSE, SOME PEOPLE IN VIETNAM DIDN'T CARE WHAT THEY PUT ON TELEVISION.



DOES THE CAMERA'S PRESENCE DISCOURAGE ATROCITIES, OR PROVOKE THEM?



WHEN CONGRESSMAN LEO RYAN WENT TO GUYANA TO INVESTIGATE THE PEOPLE'S TEMPLE SETTLEMENT, HE TOOK PLENTY OF REPORTERS WITH HIM.



PEOPLE'S TEMPLE LEADER JIM JONES WASN'T HAPPY ABOUT THE PUBLICITY.

GUNMEN SURROUNDED REP. RYAN'S PLANE AS HIS PARTY PREPARED TO LEAVE.



NBC CAMERAMAN ROBERT BROWN WAS TAPING AS REP. RYAN AND 3 OTHERS WERE SHOT AND KILLED.



HE KEPT TAPING AS THE GUNMEN ADVANCED, SHOT, AND KILLED HIM TOO.



THE TAPE OF THE SHOOTINGS WAS JUST A TRAILER FOR THE MAIN EVENT--INCESSANT TV COVERAGE OF THE MASS POISONINGS OF 914 PEOPLE IN JONESTOWN.



NOWADAYS, OF COURSE, THERE ARE ENTIRE TV PROGRAMS DEVOTED TO UNPLEASANT BEHAVIOR. IN JANUARY, 1993, OCCURIO ASI WAS TAPING EMILIO NUNEZ AT HIS DAUGHTER'S GRAVE FOR A STORY ON THE GIRL'S SUICIDE.



SUDDENLY, EMILIO'S EX-WIFE MARITZA APPEARED UNEXPECTEDLY. EMILIO BLAMED HER FOR THE GIRL'S DEATH.



EMILIO RAN TO HIS CAR, GRABBED A 9-MM. GUN, AND SHOT MARITZA IN THE HEAD.



HE KEPT SHOOTING EVEN AFTER SHE HIT THE GROUND--AND SO DID THE OCCURIO ASI CAMERA CREW.

A MURDER ON CAMERA-- THAT'S NEWS, RIGHT?



NOT ALL TV DEATHS ARE BROADCAST. IN JUNE OF 1971, HEALTH FOOD ADVOCATE JEROME RODALE DIED WHILE TAPING THE DICK CAVETT TALK SHOW.



RODALE DISCUSSED HIS DIETARY PRACTICES...

TRY SOME ASPARAGUS BOILED IN URINE-- VERY HEALTHFUL.



UH... NO, THANKS.

WHEN ANOTHER GUEST BEGAN DISCUSSING POLITICS, RODALE SLUMPED FORWARD.



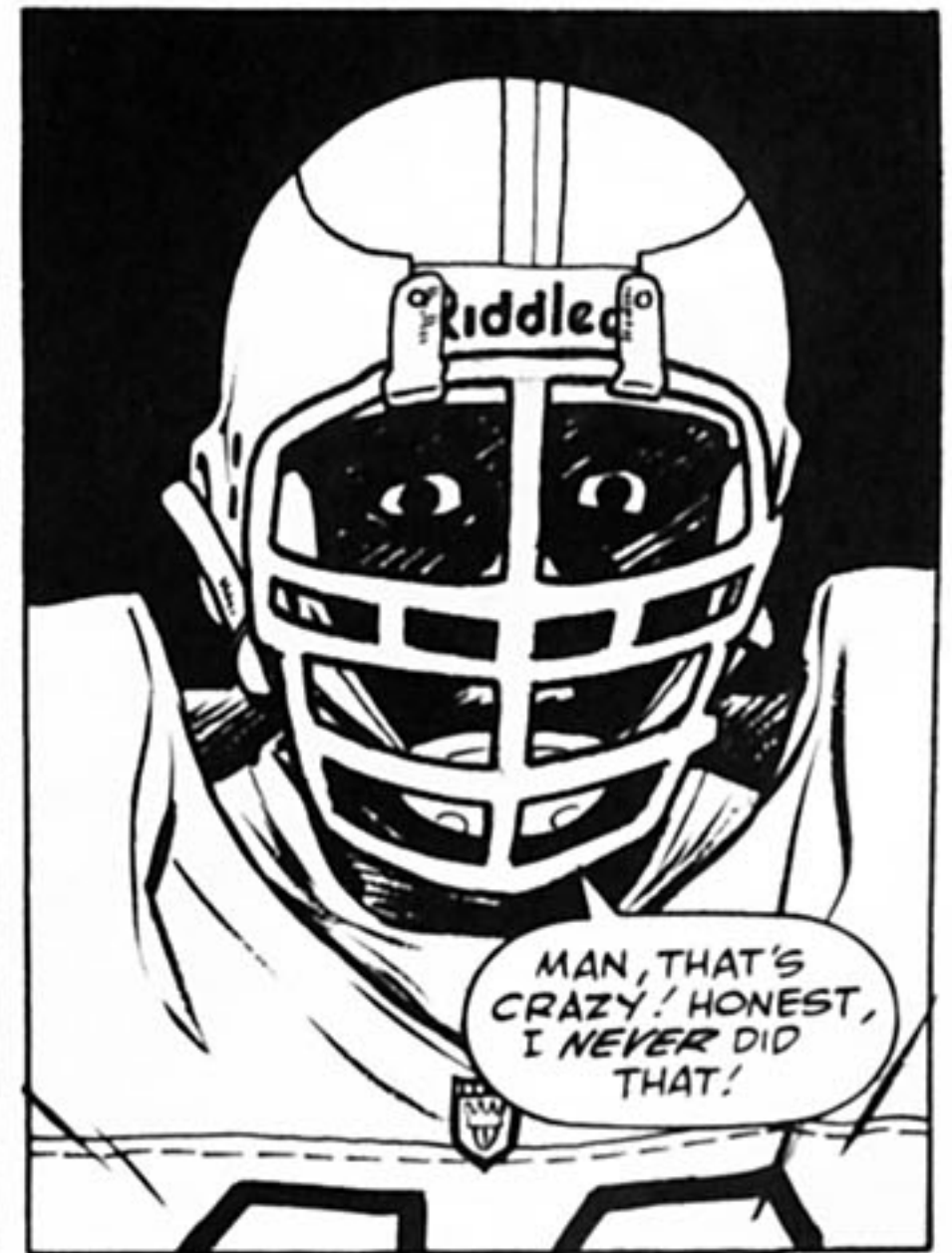
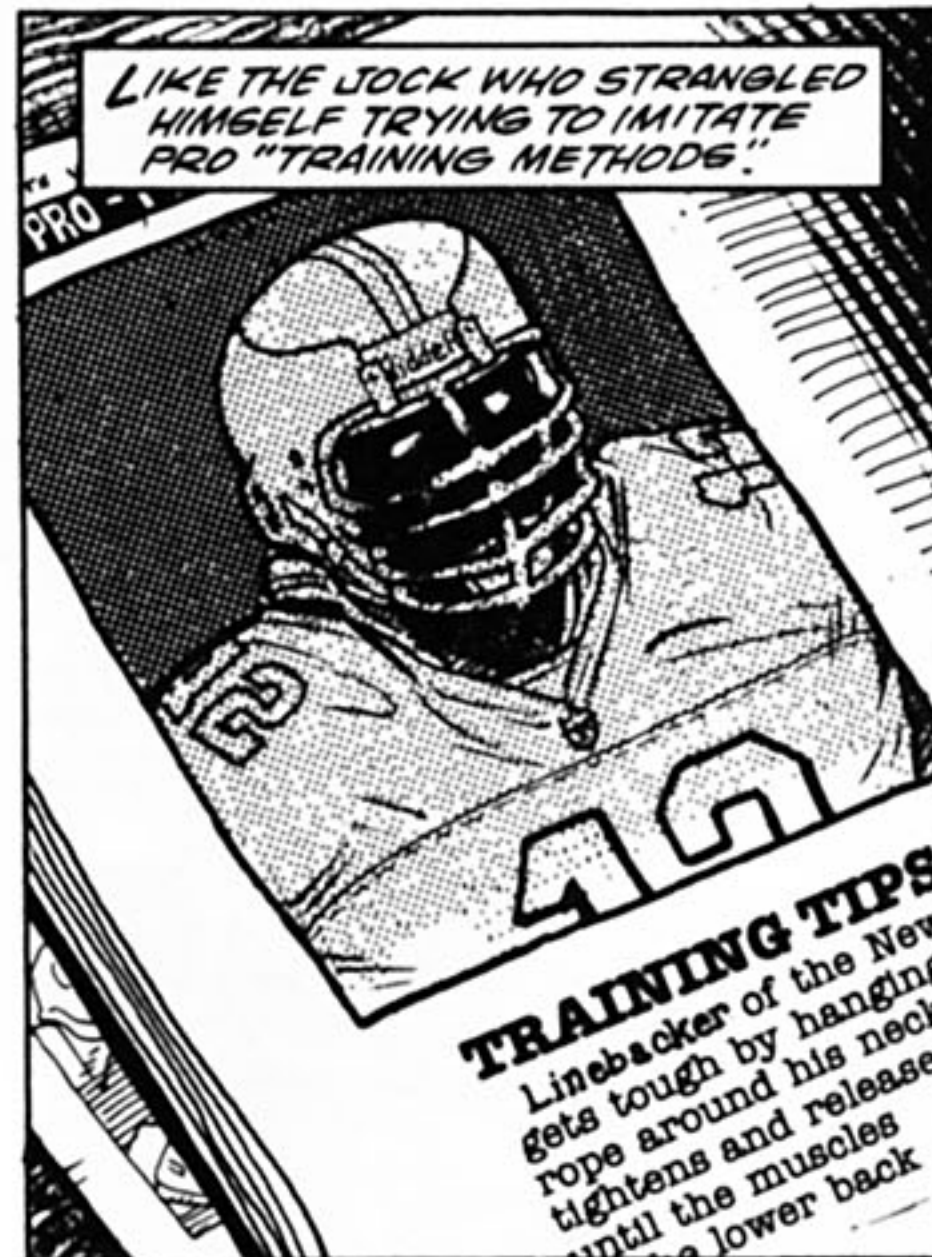
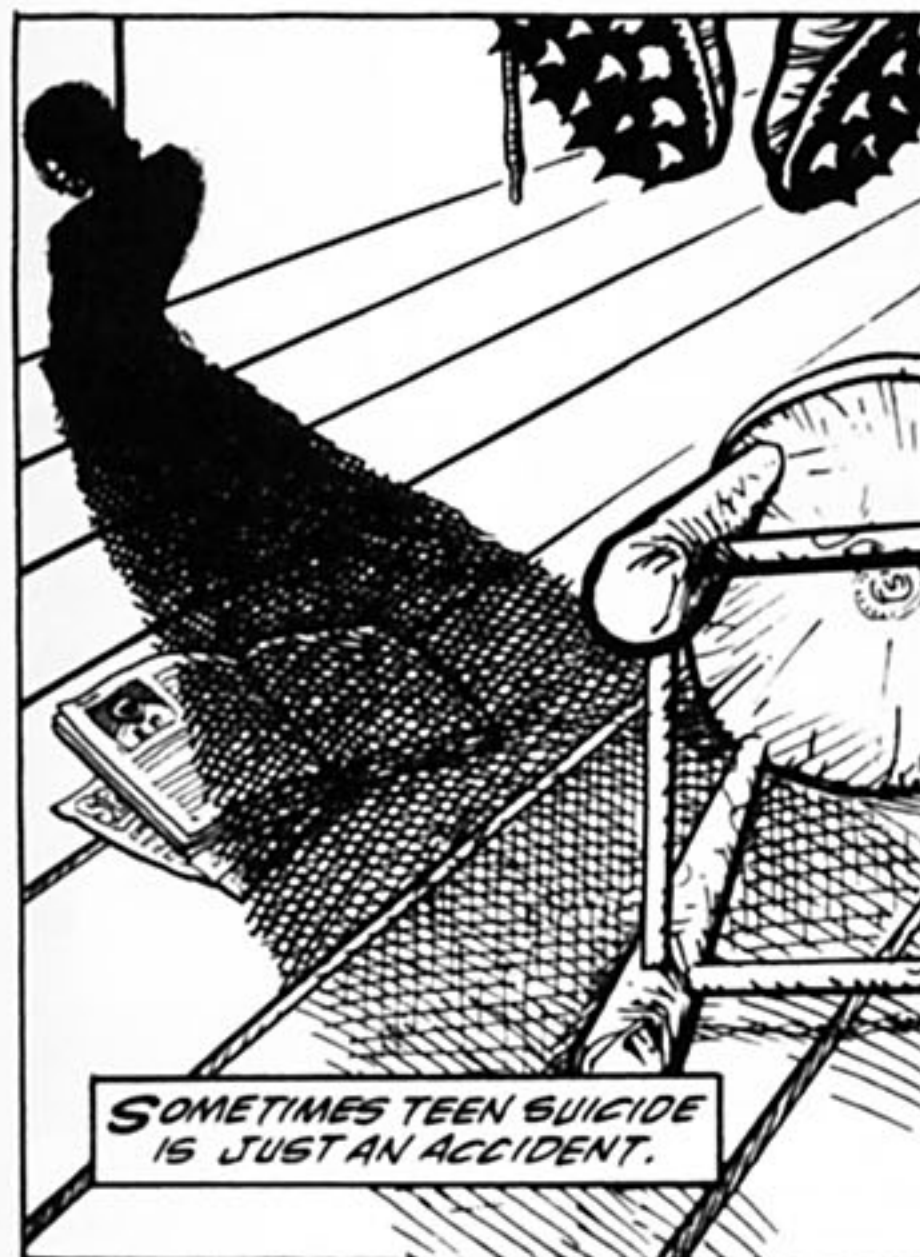
SNORRRKKKK...

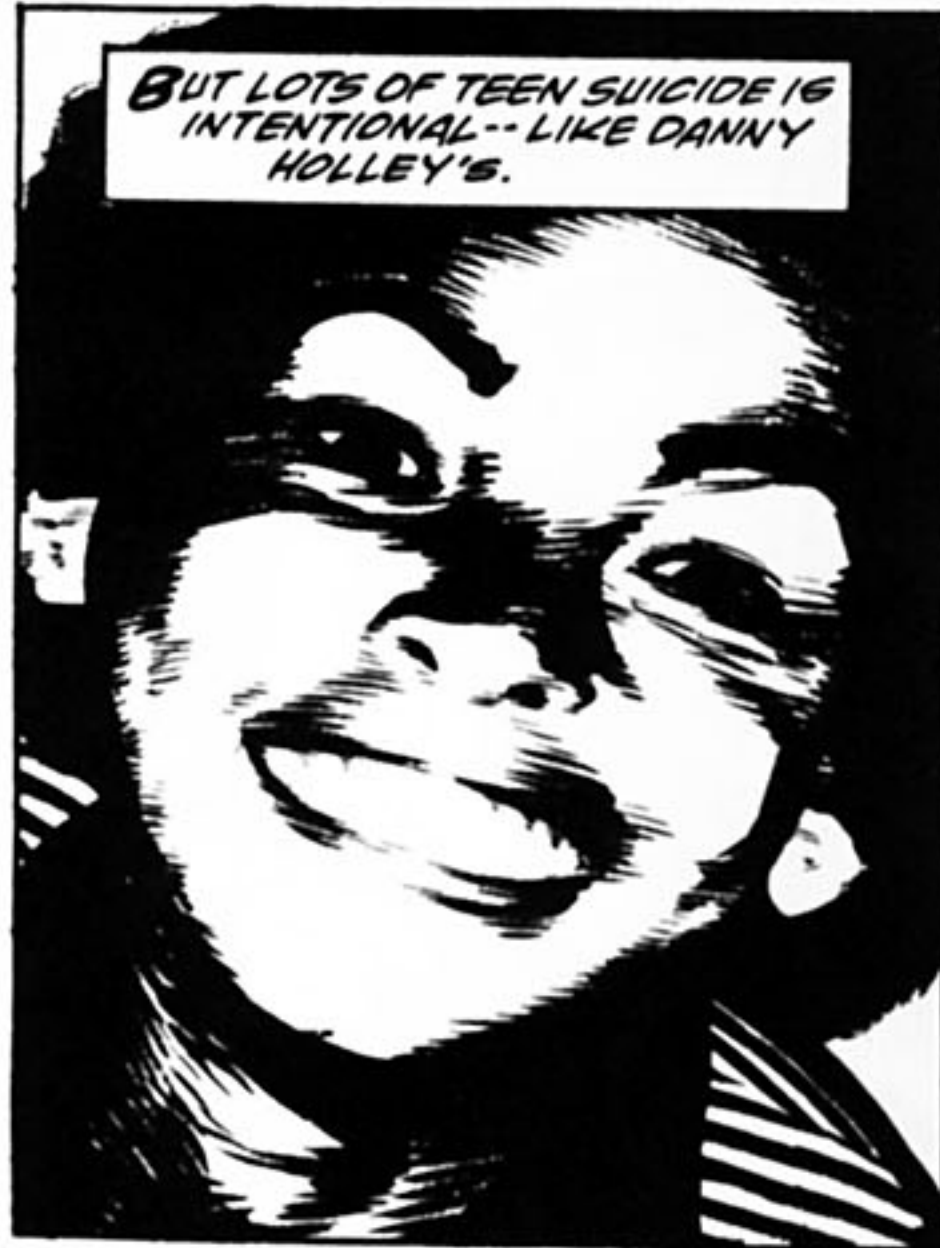
ARE WE BORING YOU MR. RODALE?

HEALTH GURU RODALE HAD DIED ON CAMERA AT THE AGE OF 72, BUT THE SHOW WAS NEVER BROADCAST. IRONY JUST ISN'T AS NEWS-WORTHY AS GRUESOMENESS.



TEAM SUICIDE





BUT LOTS OF TEEN SUICIDE IS INTENTIONAL-- LIKE DANNY HOLLEY'S.



DANNY'S ARMY SGT. DAD GOT TRANSFERRED FROM GERMANY TO KOREA. THE ARMY SHIPPED THEIR CAR TO NEW ORLEANS, AND THEIR MONEY WAS STUCK IN A BANK IN FLORIDA. DANNY, HIS MOM, AND 3 OTHER KIDS WERE LEFT NEAR FT. ORD. IN CALIFORNIA.



DANNY ENDED UP COLLECTING CANS FOR MONEY TO BUY FOOD FOR HIS FAMILY.



IF THERE WAS ONE LESS MOUTH TO FEED, THINGS WOULD BE BETTER.

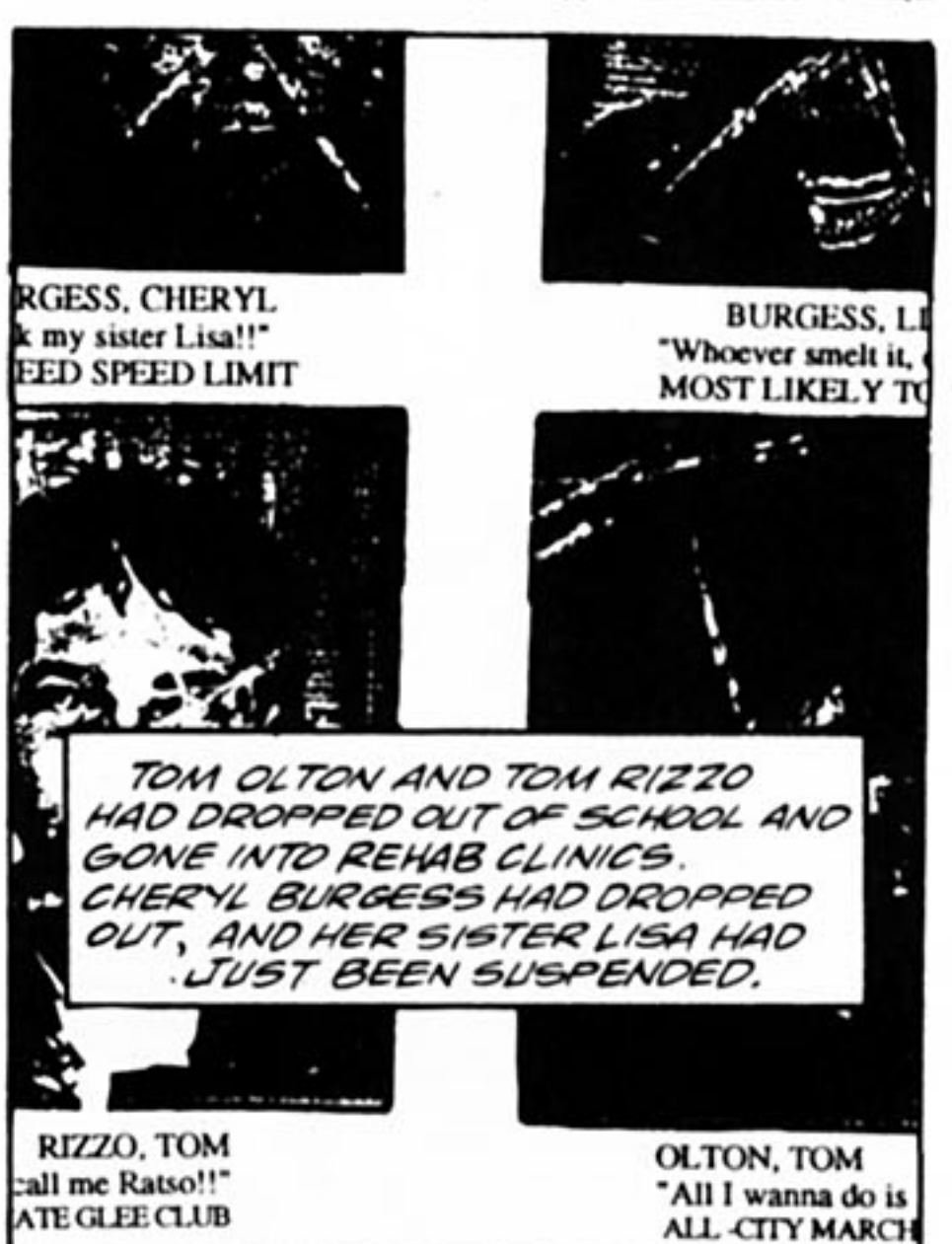
ON AUGUST 27, 1984, DANNY HOLLEY HANGED HIMSELF FOR THE GOOD OF HIS FAMILY. HE WAS 13 YEARS OLD.



MOST KIDS WHO KILL THEMSELVES DON'T SEE ANY OTHER WAY OUT. FOR INSTANCE, 30% OF ALL TEEN SUICIDES ARE GAY KIDS WHO WOULD RATHER BE DEAD.



LOTS OF BURNOUTS TRY TO KILL THEMSELVES. THEY DO DRUGS, THEY DRINK, THEY MESS UP IN SCHOOL, AND THEY GET DEPRESSED. IN BERGENFIELD, NEW JERSEY, 4 KIDS OFFED THEMSELVES ONE NIGHT IN 1987.



BURGESS, CHERYL
"My sister Lisa!!"
SPEED LIMIT

BURGESS, LISA
"Whoever smelt it,
MOST LIKELY TO

TOM OLTON AND TOM RIZZO HAD DROPPED OUT OF SCHOOL AND GONE INTO REHAB CLINICS. CHERYL BURGESS HAD DROPPED OUT, AND HER SISTER LISA HAD JUST BEEN SUSPENDED.

RIZZO, TOM
"Call me Ratso!!"
ATE GLEE CLUB

OLTON, TOM
"All I wanna do is
ALL CITY MARCH

BERGENFIELD KIDS WERE GETTING DRUNK AND DYING ALL OVER. TWO GUYS GOT HIT BY TRAINS, ANOTHER GUY WALKED INTO A POND AND DROWNED.



WERE THESE REALLY ACCIDENTS?

CHERYL BURGESS WAS DATING A GUY WHO GOT DRUNK AND FELL 200 FEET OFF A CLIFF.



BEFORE SHE DROPPED OUT, CHERYL WOULD SKIP CLASS TO VISIT THE GRAVE.



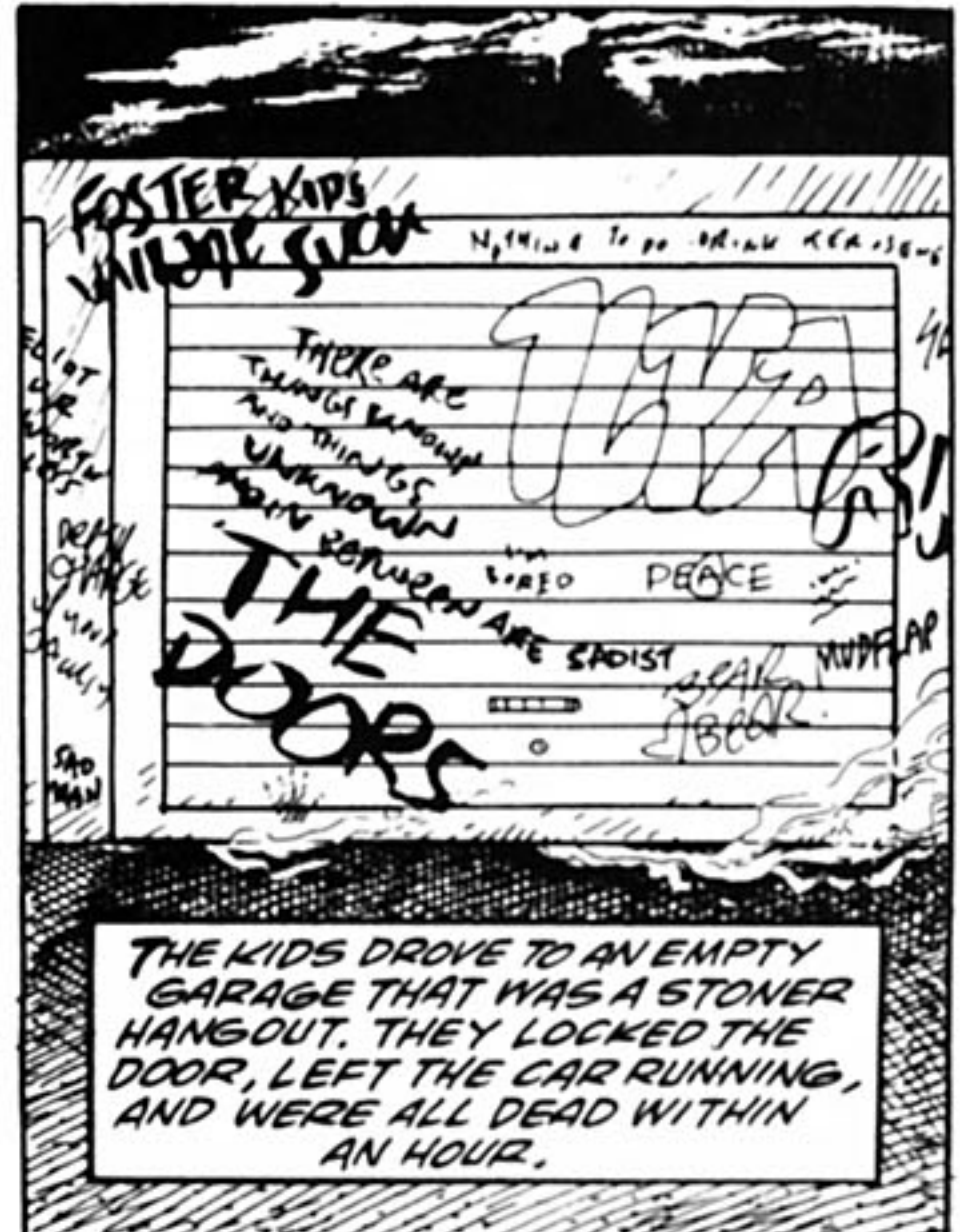
ON MARCH 17, THE TWO TOMS, CHERYL, AND LISA WENT OUT DRIVING AROUND.



THEY TRIED TO BUY JUST THE HOSE FROM A GAS STATION'S CAR VACUUM, BUT THE ATTENDANT SAID NO.



FOSTER KIDS
WANTED SUCH



THE KIDS DROVE TO AN EMPTY GARAGE THAT WAS A STONER HANGOUT. THEY LOCKED THE DOOR, LEFT THE CAR RUNNING, AND WERE ALL DEAD WITHIN AN HOUR.

QUARTER
THE CASE GOT A LOT OF ATTENTION.
Dec. 3, 1987

**FOUR TEENS
FOUND DEAD!**

**FRIENDS
TO THE END**
EXCLUSIVE

Bergenfield teens
die in pact

SUICIDE SOLUTION

LARGEST CIRCULATION OF ANY PAPER IN AMERICA

TWO DAYS LATER, A COUPLE OF GIRLS IN ALSIP, ILLINOIS KILLED THEMSELVES THE SAME WAY...



...AND 2 MORE KIDS FROM BERGENFIELD ATTEMPTED SUICIDE IN THE SAME GARAGE THE FOLLOWING WEEK.

PARENTS CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHY THEIR KIDS WANT TO DIE, SO THEY BLAME HEAVY METAL MUSIC. THEY THINK IT'S "SATANIC" OR SOMETHING.





IN 1984, A KID SHOT HIMSELF IN THE HEAD AFTER LISTENING TO AN OZZY OSBOURNE TAPE FOR FIVE HOURS.



IN 1986, ANOTHER KID SHOT HIMSELF IN THE HEAD WHILE LISTENING TO "BLIZZARD OF OZZ." THE PARENTS SUED OZZY-- THEY THOUGHT THE MUSIC WAS TO BLAME FOR THEIR KID'S DEATH.



THE JUDGE RULED THAT OZZY'S LYRICS WEREN'T MEANT TO ENCOURAGE SUICIDE.

OF COURSE, IF THE PARENTS HAD LISTENED TO "SUICIDE SOLUTION" EVEN ONCE, THEY WOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT.



WHEN THEY WERE KIDS, THE SAME PARENTS WHO COMPLAIN ABOUT HEAVY METAL THOUGHT THE BEATLES WERE GREAT. WELL, THE BEATLES INSPIRED CHARLIE MANSON.



IN 1987, A GUY IN AUSTRALIA SAID THAT BOB DYLAN'S MUSIC HAD GIVEN HIM THE STRENGTH TO KICK HIS MOTHER TO DEATH.

How does it feel?



FOLK MUSIC MAKES LOTS OF PEOPLE WANT TO KILL.



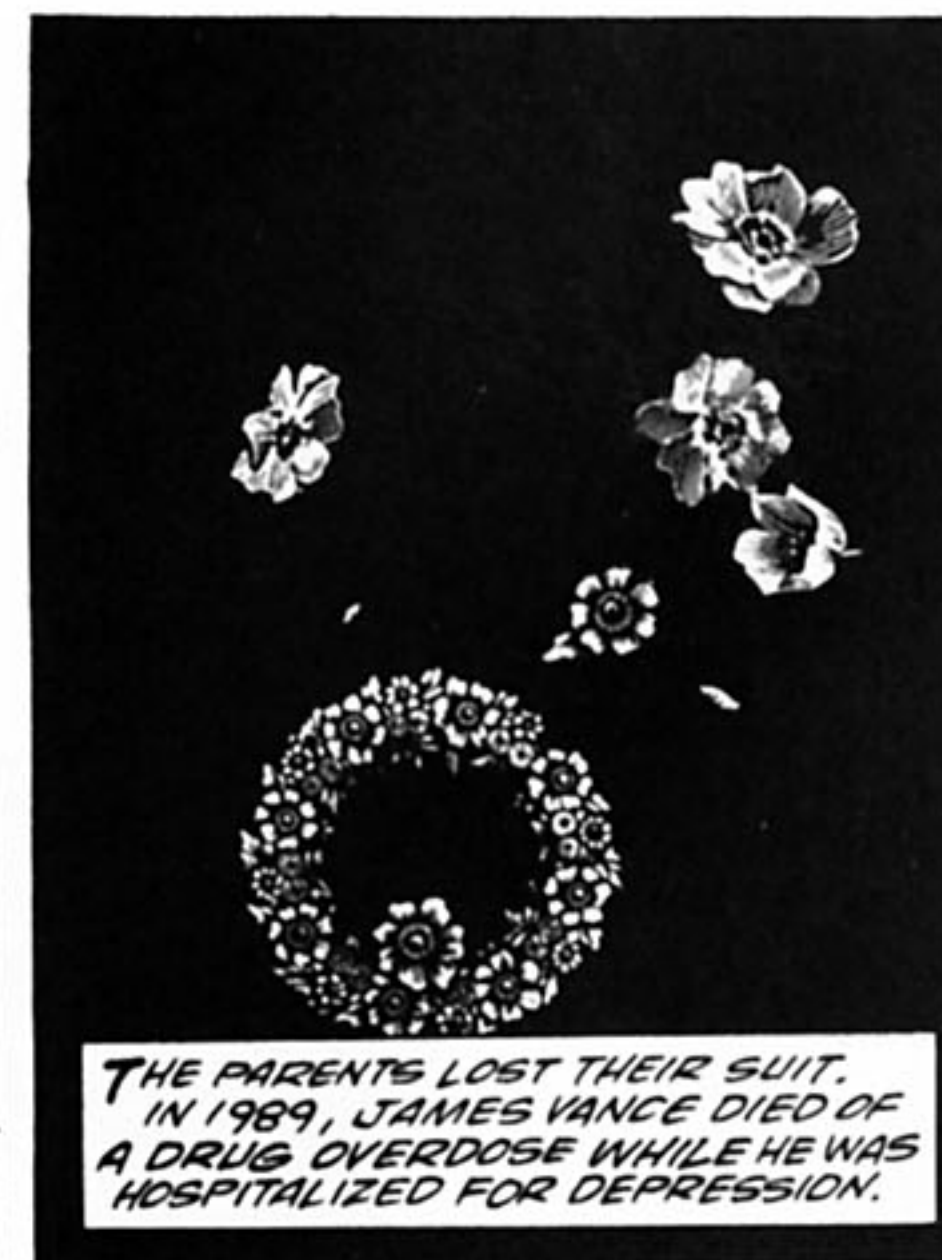
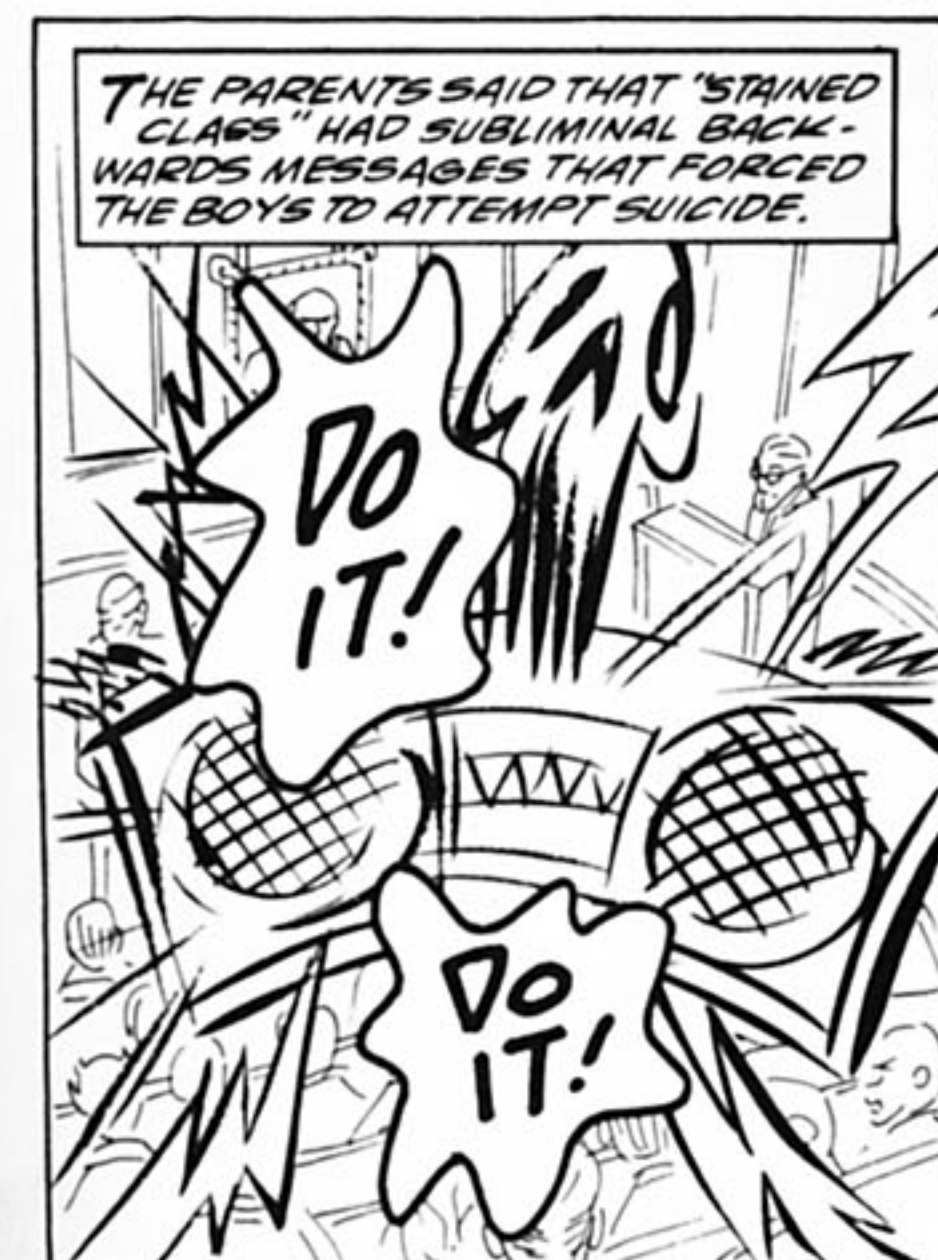
BUT THE ONLY MUSIC THAT'S BEEN PROVEN TO HAVE A BAD EFFECT ON BEHAVIOR IS COUNTRY-WESTERN. A PROFESSOR IN WYOMING DID A STUDY SHOWING PEOPLE DRINK MORE WHEN THEY LISTEN TO C+W.



EVEN THOUGH THEY LIVED IN NEVADA, RAYMOND BELKNAP AND JAMES VANCE WEREN'T INTO COUNTRY MUSIC -- THEY LIKED METAL. ON DECEMBER 23, 1985, RAY GAVE JAMES A JUDAS PRIEST ALBUM FOR CHRISTMAS.



THE BOYS SHUT THEMSELVES UP IN JAMES' BEDROOM, DRANK BEER, SMOKED POT, AND LISTENED TO "STAINED CLASS" FOR FIVE HOURS.





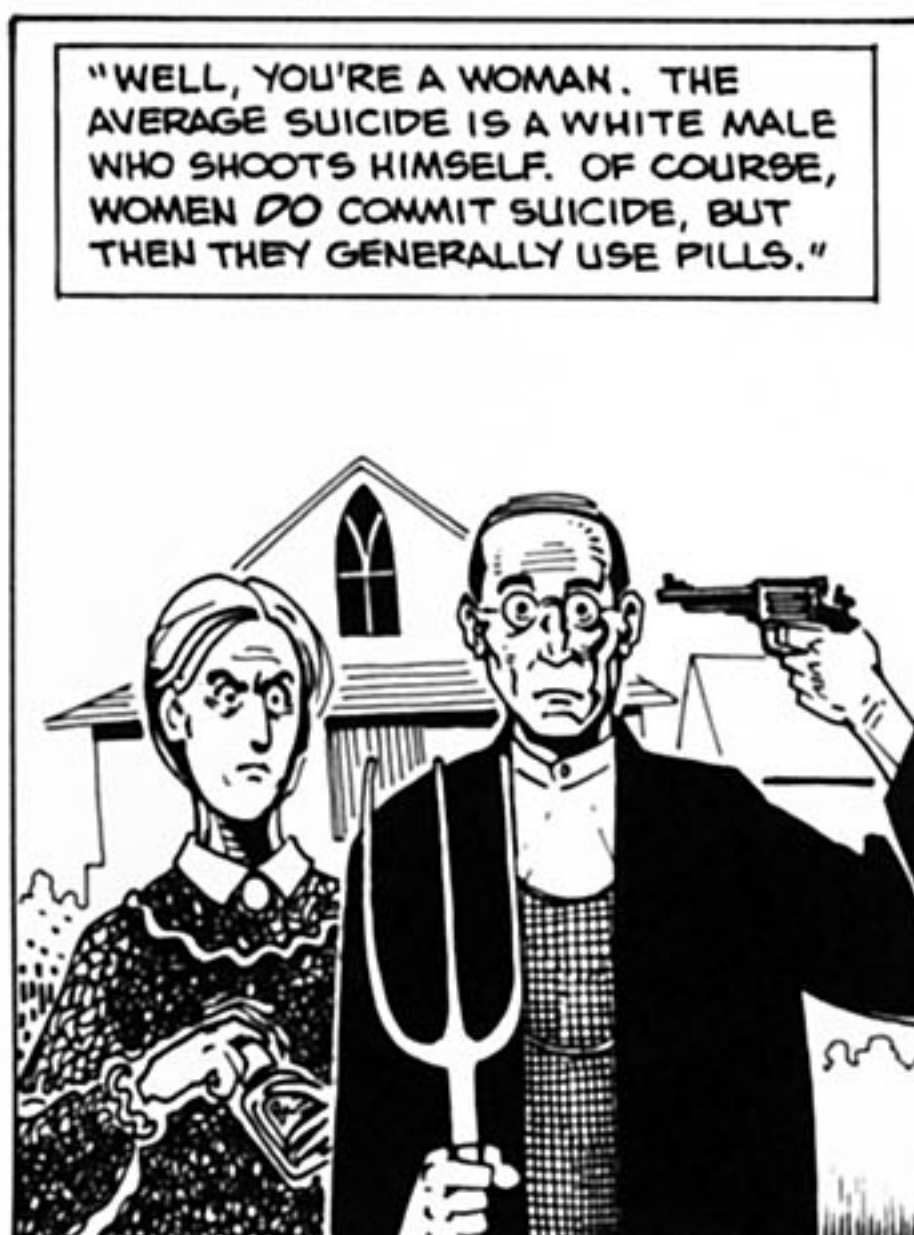
DEBBIE LINKLETTER'S BIG CONTRIBUTION TO AMERICAN CULTURE WAS THAT EVERY TV SHOW ABOUT DRUG ABUSE EVER SINCE HAS HAD SOMEBODY TRYING TO FLY.

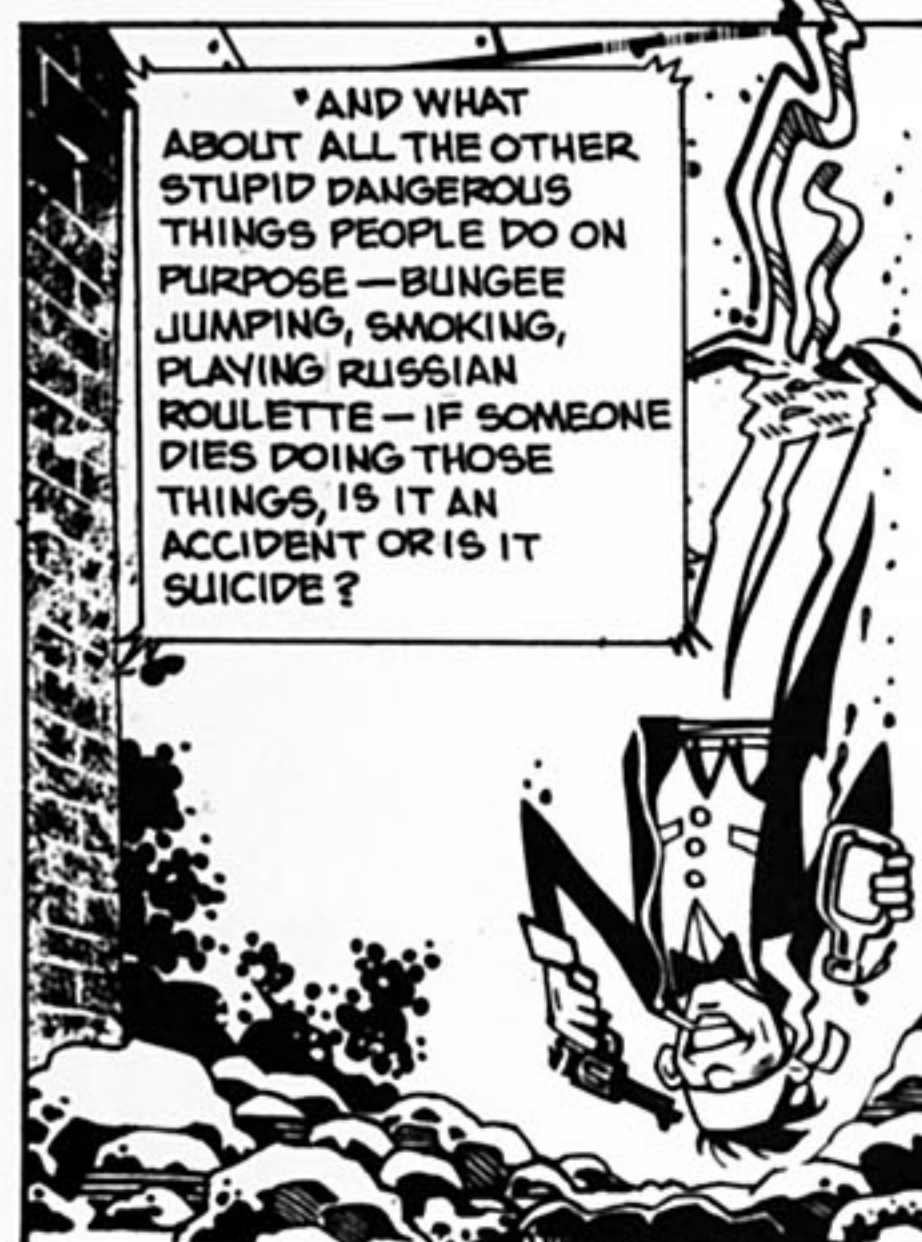


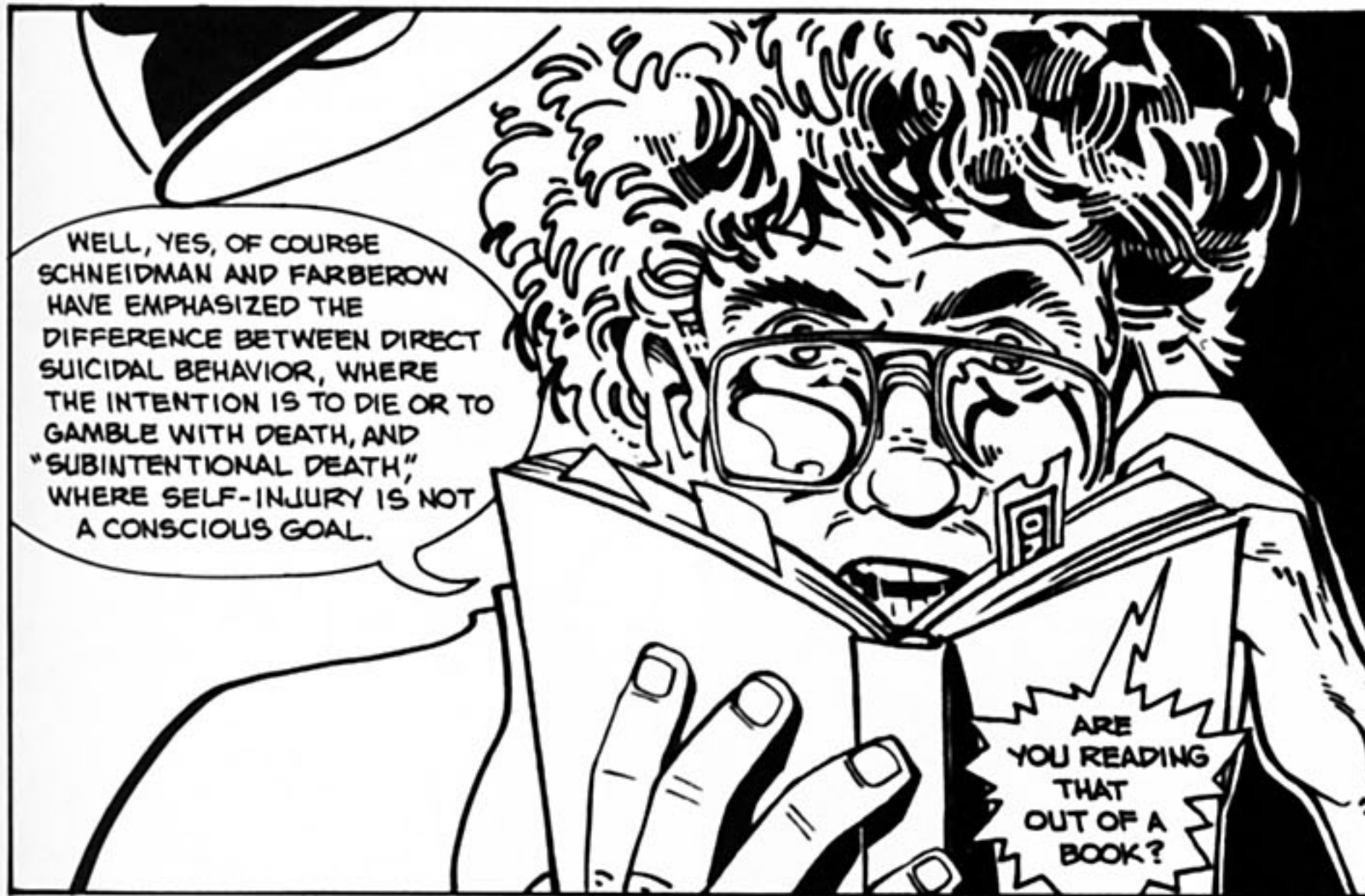
SUICIDE



BASED ON A REAL-LIFE INCIDENT.







WELL, YES, OF COURSE SCHNEIDMAN AND FARBEROW HAVE EMPHASIZED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN DIRECT SUICIDAL BEHAVIOR, WHERE THE INTENTION IS TO DIE OR TO GAMBLE WITH DEATH, AND "SUBINTENTIONAL DEATH," WHERE SELF-INJURY IS NOT A CONSCIOUS GOAL.

ARE YOU READING THAT OUT OF A BOOK?



UM, WELL, UH...

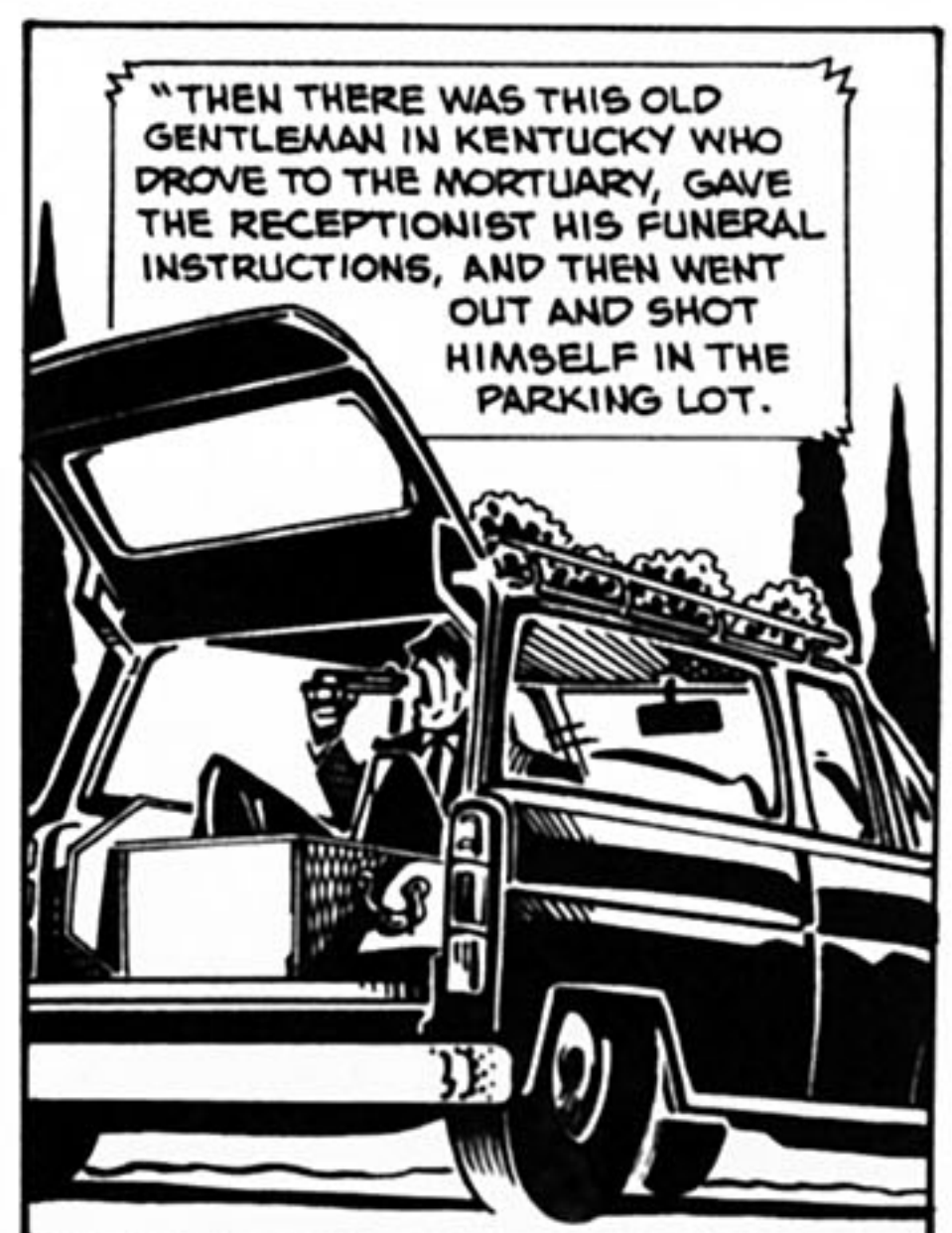
YEAH, I THOUGHT SO. HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT I ADMIRE? SOMEONE WHO OFFS THEMSEL IN A REALLY UNIQUE WAY.



"LIKE THE GUY IN ENGLAND WHO KILLED HIMSELF BY DRILLING HOLES INTO HIS OWN HEAD. HE JUST KEPT DRILLING AND DRILLING UNTIL HE DIED.



"OR THIS OTHER GUY WHO DID HIMSELF IN BY DRIVING NAILS INTO HIS HEAD WITH A HAMMER. WHAT IS IT ABOUT CARPENTRY TOOLS?



"THEN THERE WAS THIS OLD GENTLEMAN IN KENTUCKY WHO DROVE TO THE MORTUARY, GAVE THE RECEPTIONIST HIS FUNERAL INSTRUCTIONS, AND THEN WENT OUT AND SHOT HIMSELF IN THE PARKING LOT.



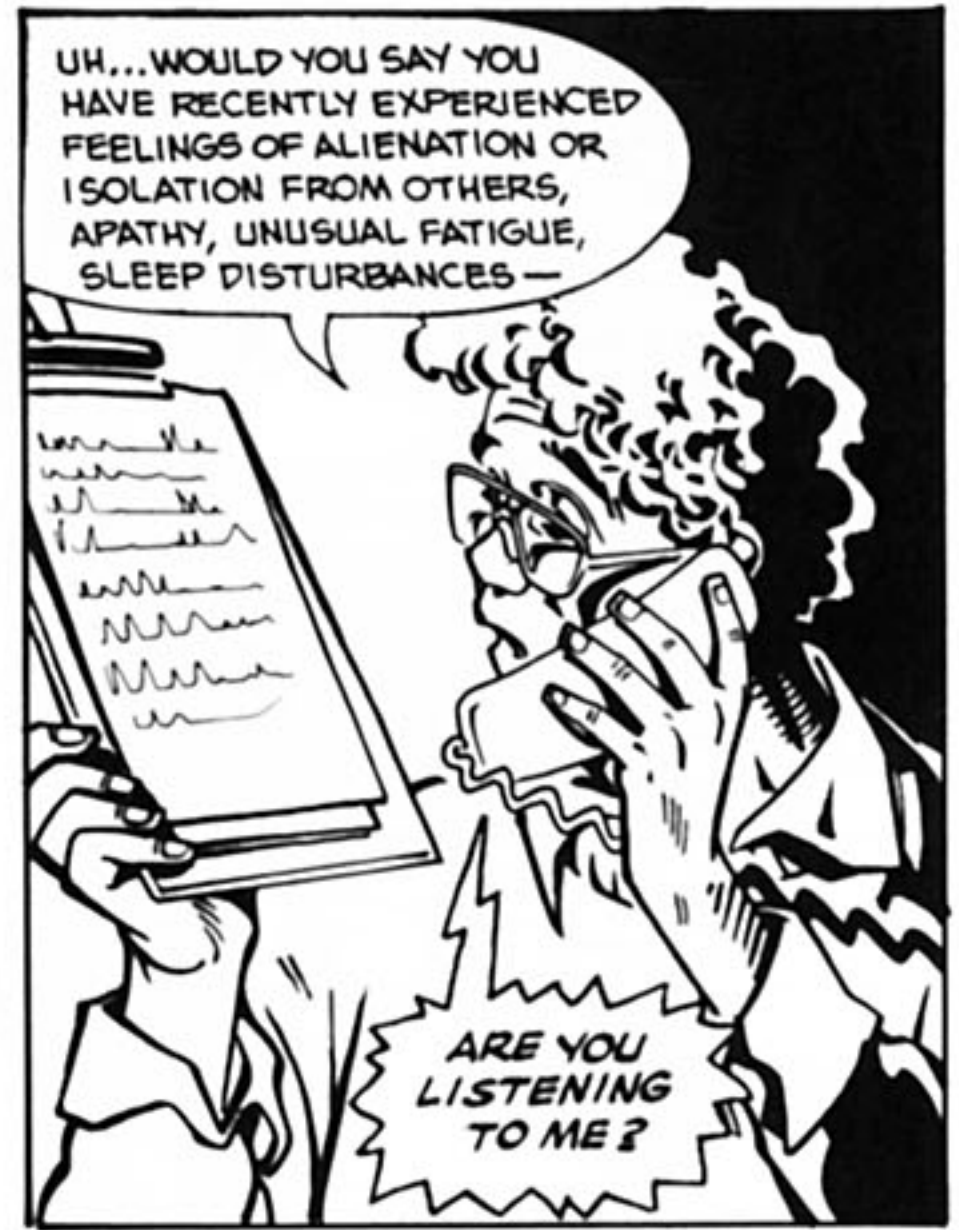
"BUT MY ALL-TIME FAVORITE WAS THE KID UP IN THE BRONX, BACK IN THE LATE '80S. THEY FOUND HIM DEAD IN A VACANT LOT AND THEY COULDN'T FIGURE OUT WHAT HAD HAPPENED.



"HIS HEAD WAS FULL OF EQUALLY-SPACED HOLES, ALL EXACTLY THE SAME SIZE.



"FINALLY, ONE OF THE INVESTIGATORS NOTICED THAT THERE WERE A LOT OF PENNIES LYING AROUND ON THE GROUND NEAR WHERE THE KID WAS FOUND."





HELLO, EVERYBODY-
NICE SEEING
YOU AGAIN.

THE QUALITY OF MERCY



TODAY ON "NEWS OF THE
DEAD" WE'RE TAKING A SPECIAL
LOOK AT EUTHANASIA - YOU
KNOW, MERCY KILLING



WE'VE TALKED A LOT IN THE
PAST ABOUT EMOTIONAL SUICIDES-
PEOPLE WHO KILL THEMSELVES
BECAUSE THEIR FAVORITE TEAM
LOSES...

AND THE FINAL
SCORE, 4 TO 2!



... OR WHO JUMP OFF A
BUILDING BECAUSE THEY'RE
HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE
GAS COMPANY OR SOME-
THING.

BUT WHAT ABOUT
RATIONAL SUICIDE?



WHAT ABOUT
LARRY McAFFEE?

HE WRECKED HIS MOTORCYCLE
IN AN ACCIDENT DOWN IN
GEORGIA IN 1985.



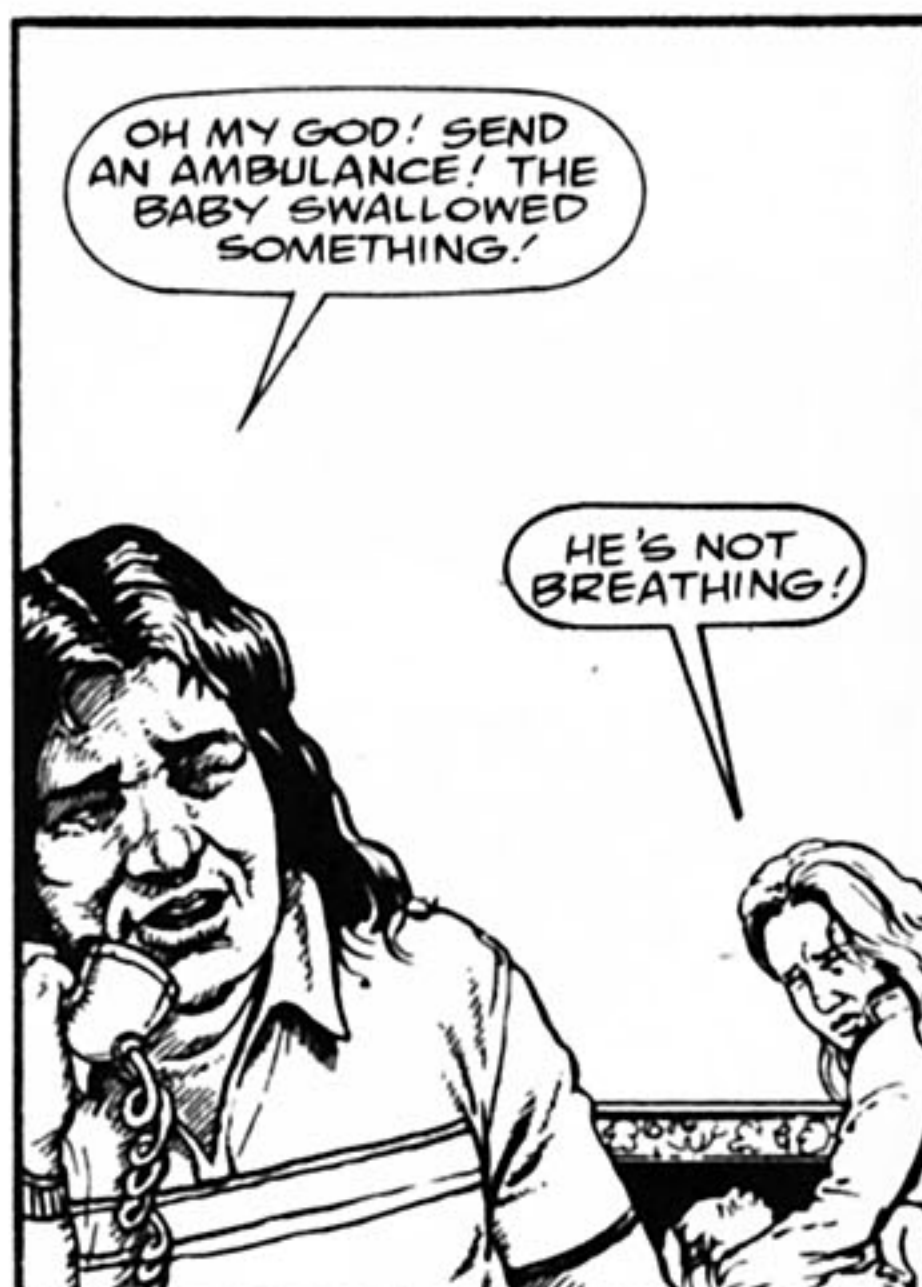
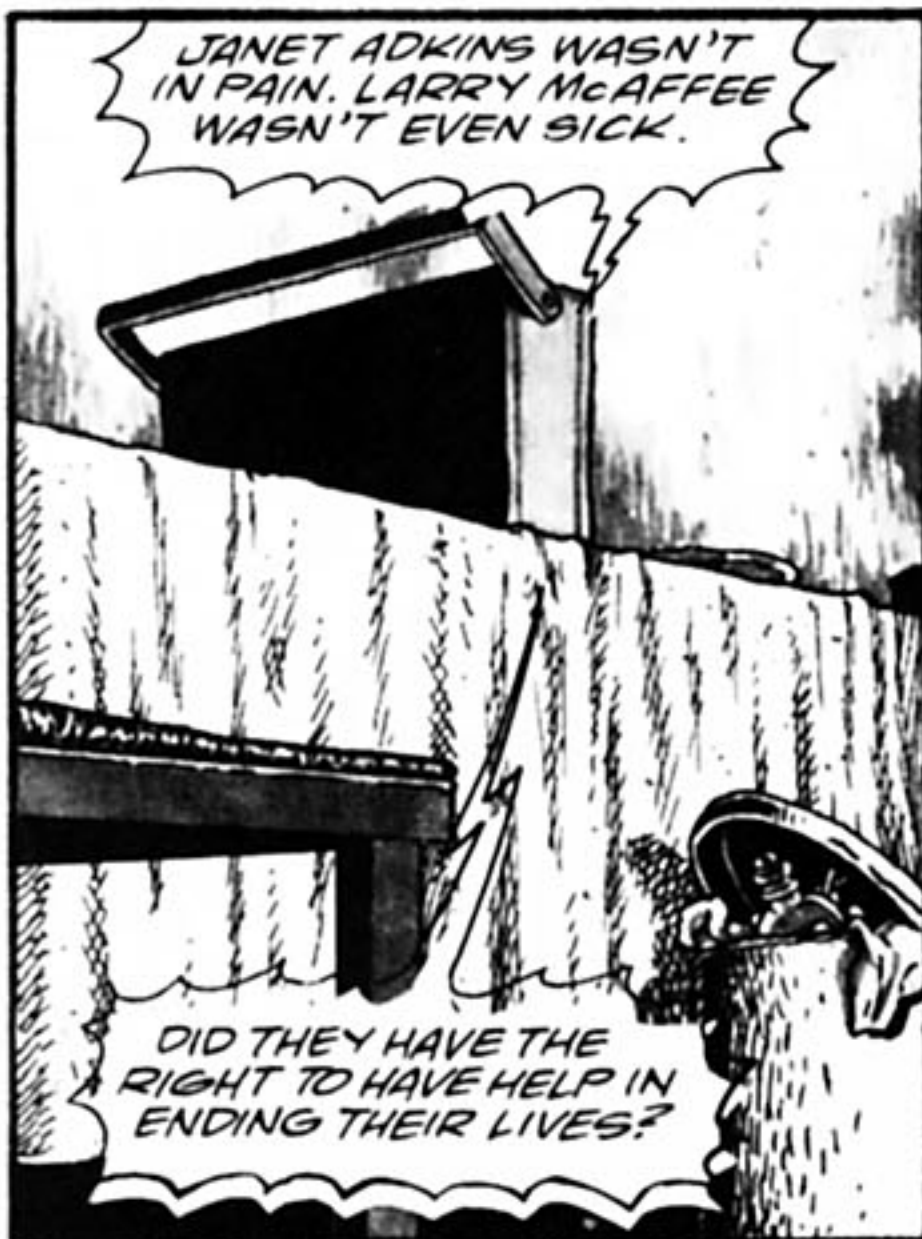
HE WOKE UP A
QUADRIPELEGIC.

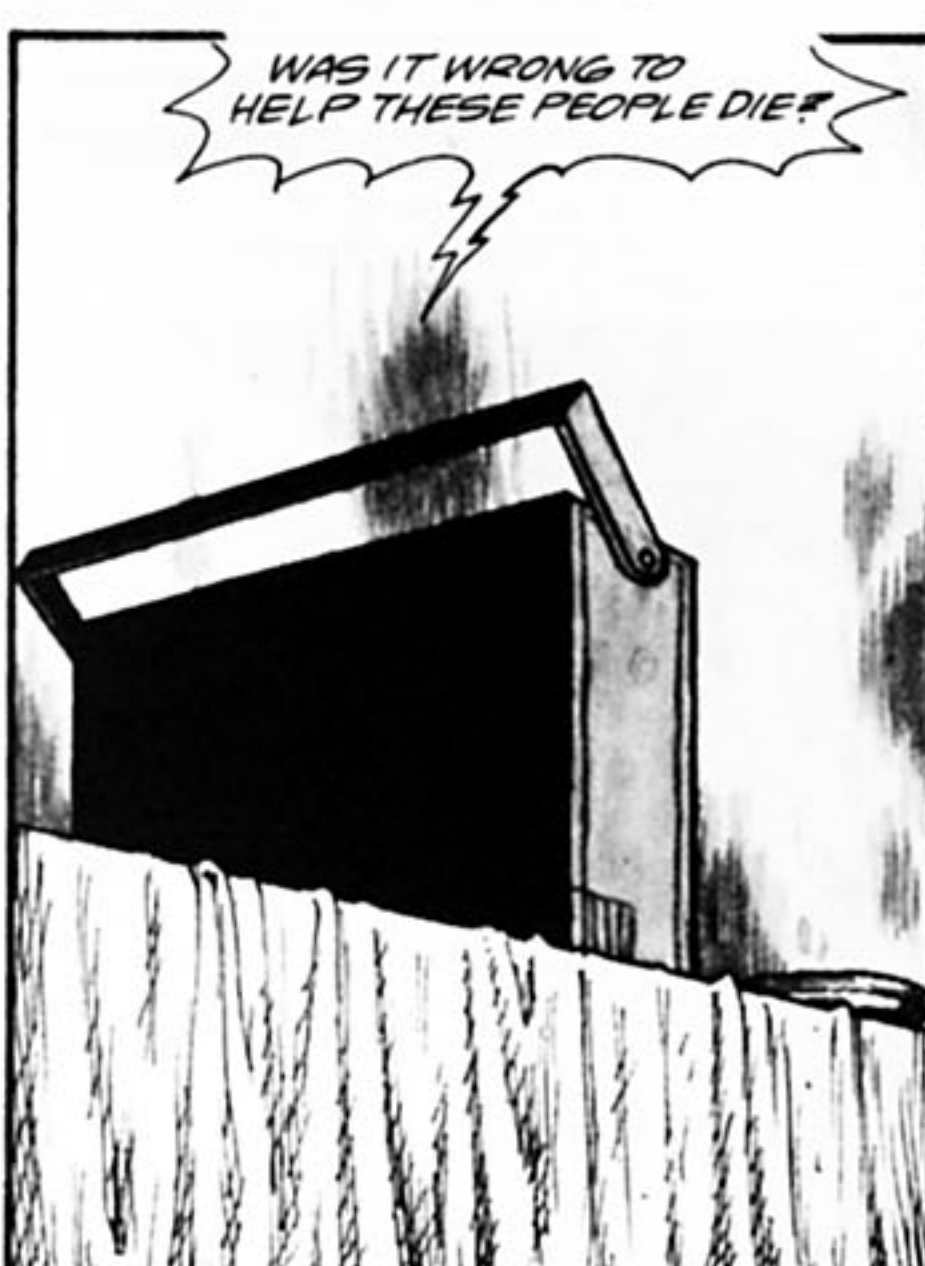
HE COULDN'T
DO ANY OF
THE THINGS
HE LOVED
ANYMORE,
LIKE RIDING
HIS BIKE,
OR MOVING,
OR BREATHING.



IT TOOK UNTIL 1989 -
4 YEARS - TO GET COURT
PERMISSION TO HAVE HIS
VENTILATOR DISCONNECTED.

GOOD NEWS, LARRY!
YOU CAN DIE NOW!



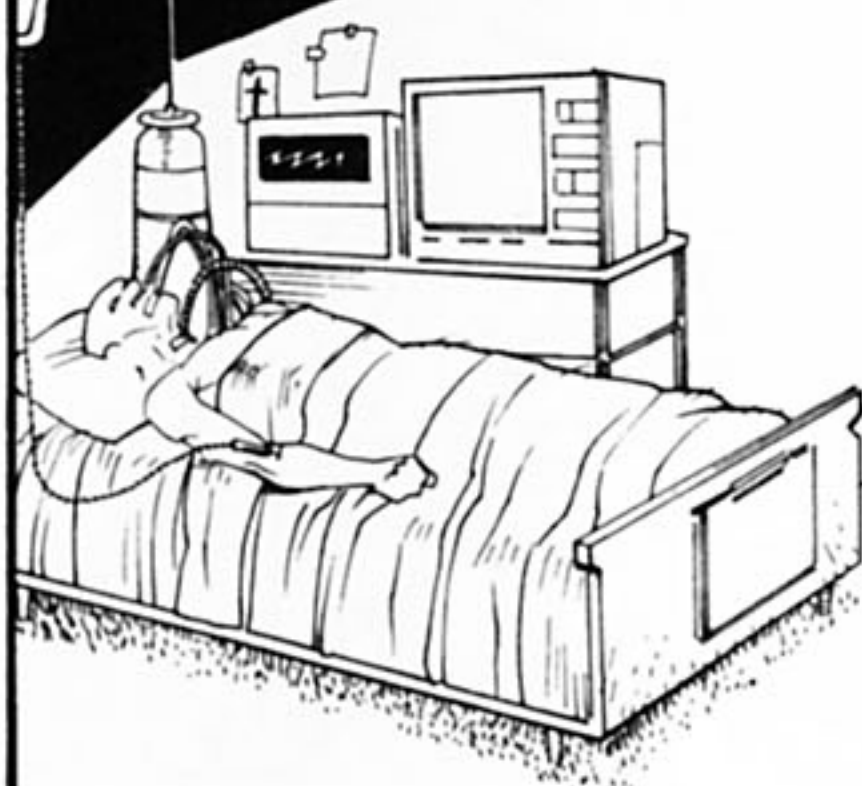


the RIGHT TO DIE

IN HOLLAND, LEGAL GUIDELINES PERMIT EUTHANASIA IN CERTAIN CASES.



IN AMERICA, MERCY KILLING IS STILL ILLEGAL.



THE SOCIETY FOR THE RIGHT TO DIE SUPPORTS "PASSIVE EUTHANASIA" - ALLOWING SOMEONE TO DIE NATURALLY.



THE MORE RADICAL HEMLOCK SOCIETY ADVOCATES "ASSISTED SUICIDE."

HERE, LET ME HELP YOU WITH THAT.



IT'S A CONTROVERSIAL-POSSIBLY ILLEGAL-IDEA.

BUT DEREK HUMPHRY, HEMLOCK SOCIETY FOUNDER, IS A CONTROVERSIAL GUY.



HIS WIFE JEAN HAD BREAST CANCER WHICH SPREAD INTO HER SPINE. IN 1975, AT HER REQUEST, HE HELPED END HER SUFFERING.



WITHIN A YEAR,
DEREK REMARRIED.



HE WROTE A BEST-SELLING BOOK
ABOUT HIS FIRST WIFE'S SUICIDE,
AND FOUNDED THE HEMLOCK
SOCIETY WITH HIS NEW WIFE,
ANN.

THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER
UNTIL 1989, WHEN ANN FOUND
THAT SHE TOO HAD BREAST CANCER.



OF COURSE SHE THOUGHT DEREK
WOULD BE THERE FOR HER, LIKE
HE WAS FOR JEAN.



IT'S
JUST A
LITTLE
CANCER.



HE SMOTHERED
JEAN WITH A
PILLOW!

ANN'S A
BORDERLINE
PERSONALITY.



DEREK'S A
MURDERER!

WHERE WAS THE ROMANTIC
DEATH SHE'D DREAMED OF?



2 YEARS AFTER HER CANCER WAS
DIAGNOSED, ANN WENT INTO THE
WOODS WITH SOME BOOZE AND A
BOTTLE OF PILLS.



IN THE MEANTIME, DEREK HAD
ANOTHER BEST-SELLER.



AND SOON HE HAD ANOTHER
WIFE AS WELL.



SEEMS LIKE SUICIDE'S
BEEN VERY, VERY GOOD
TO DEREK HUMPHRY!



IN A MICHIGAN HOSPITAL, MANY YEARS AGO...



THE YOUNG MEDICAL STUDENT WAS DEEPLY AFFECTED... HE BEGAN RESEARCHING EUTHANASIA!



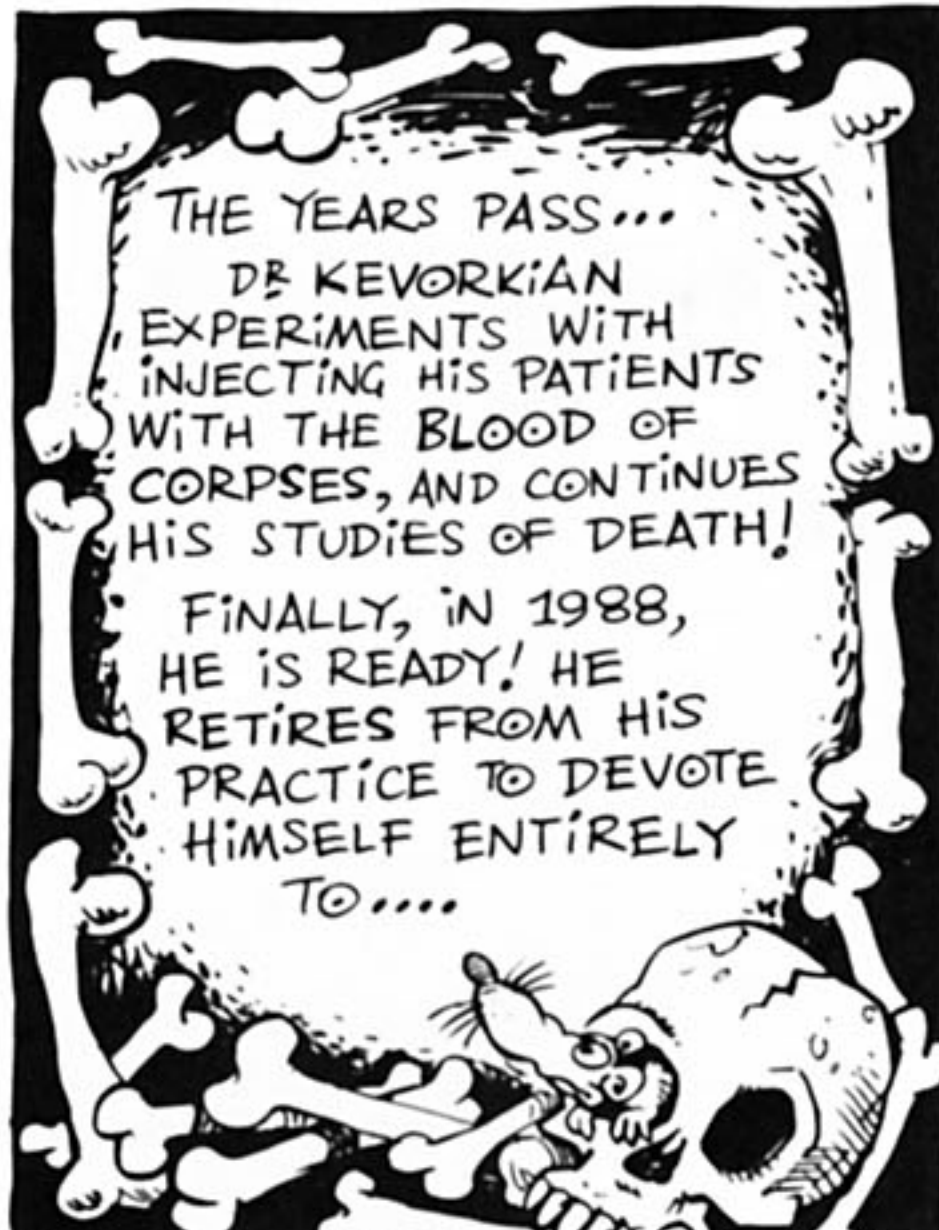
HE ALSO BEGAN ADVOCATING "ORGAN HARVESTING" FROM DEATH ROW PRISONERS - A VIEW SO "ADVANCED" IT GOT HIM THROWN OUT OF MED SCHOOL!



BUT THAT YOUNG MEDICAL STUDENT PERSISTED, AND BECAME A DOCTOR AFTER ALL - DR JACK KEVORKIAN -



-DR DEATH!



... THE **MERCITRON!**TM

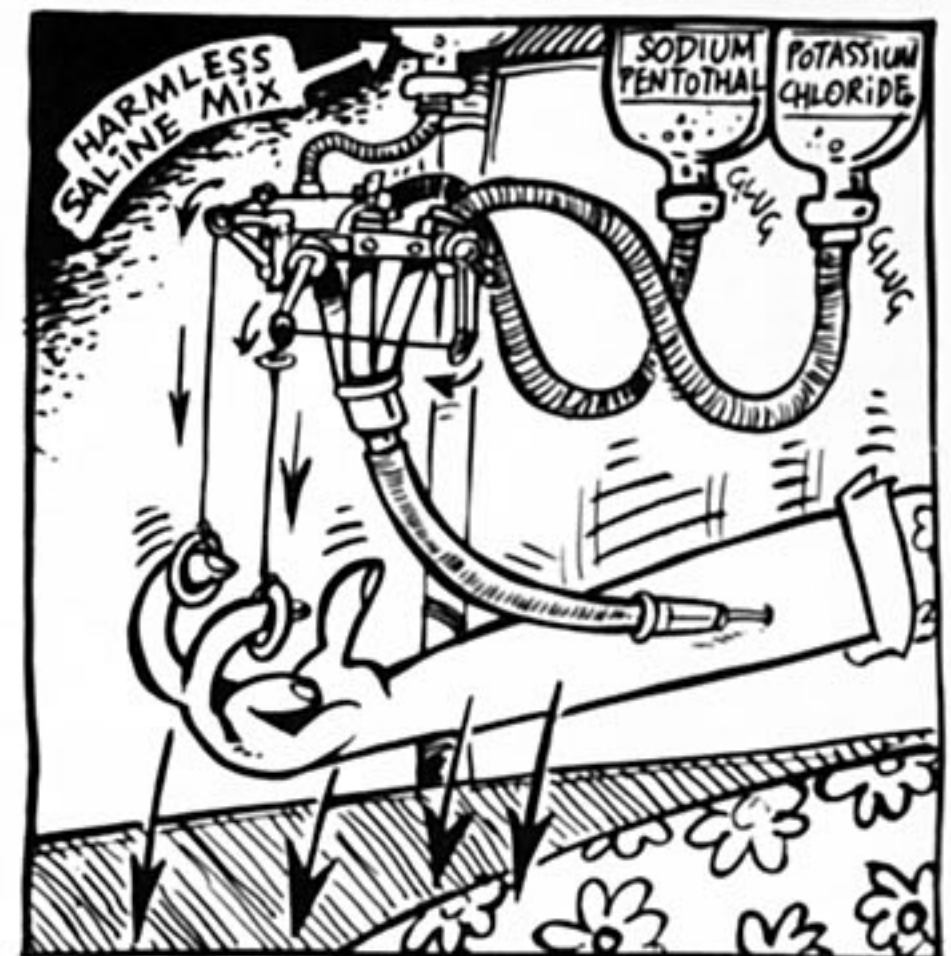


THE DOCTOR'S PROTOTYPE MACHINE FOR SELF-CONTROLLED MERCY KILLING!

FIRST THE DOCTOR INSERTS AN I.V. LINE... HARMLESS SALINE SOLUTION RUNS INTO THE PATIENT'S BLOODSTREAM...



WHEN THE PATIENT IS READY, SHE CAN PULL A STRING TO INTRODUCE A POWERFUL SEDATIVE! SOON SHE IS UNCONSCIOUS, AND HER ARM DROPS...



...PULLING THE STRING THAT DELIVERS THE LETHAL DRUG!



THE **MERCITRON**TM: SO CLEAN, SO PAINLESS... NO KNIVES, GUNS, ROPES OR SMELLY POISONS!



YES! IF YOU'RE TERMINALLY ILL, THE **MERCITRON**TM IS THE NO-MUSS, NO-FUSS WAY TO OFF YOURSELF!

OF COURSE IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE LEGAL, AND DR KEVORKIAN WAS BARRED FROM USING THE **MERCITRON**TM AGAIN!



BRAVELY HE CARRIED ON HIS WORK, USING PLASTIC BAGS AND TANKS OF CARBON MONOXIDE!

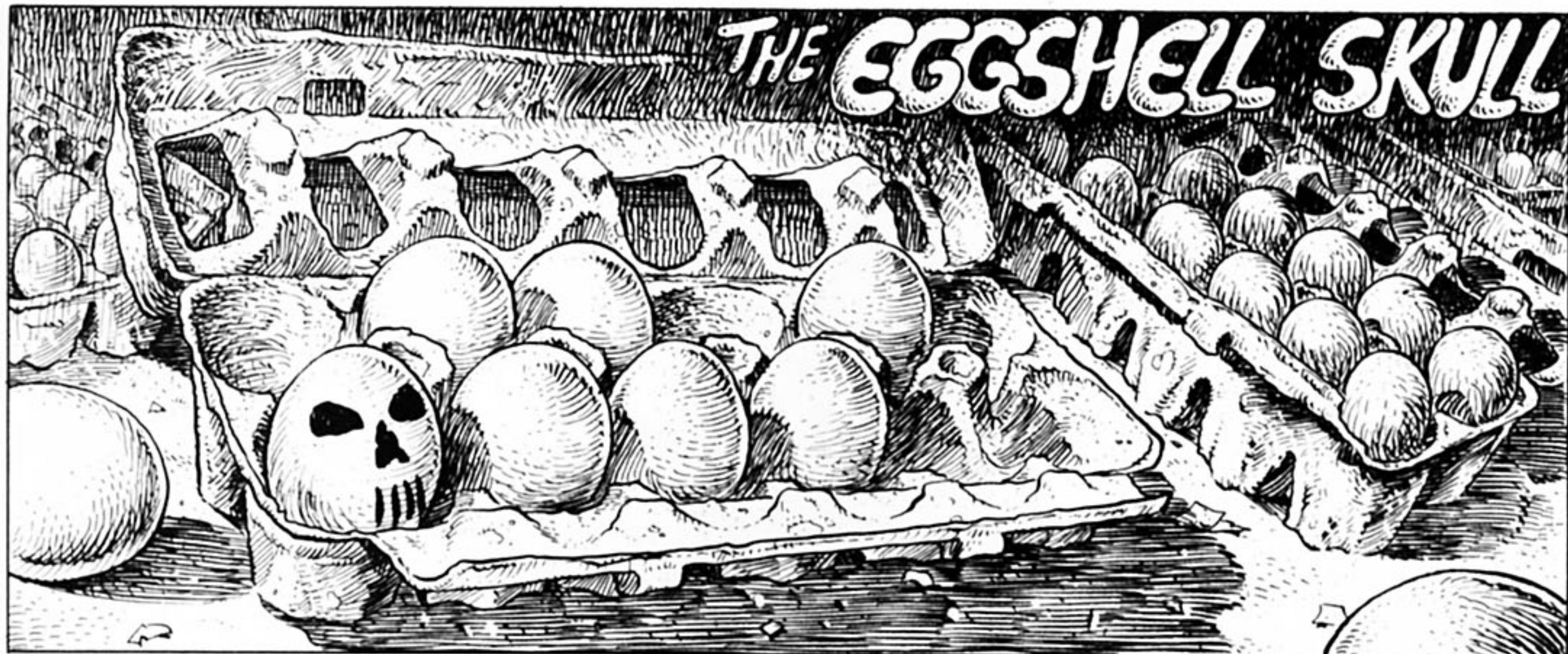


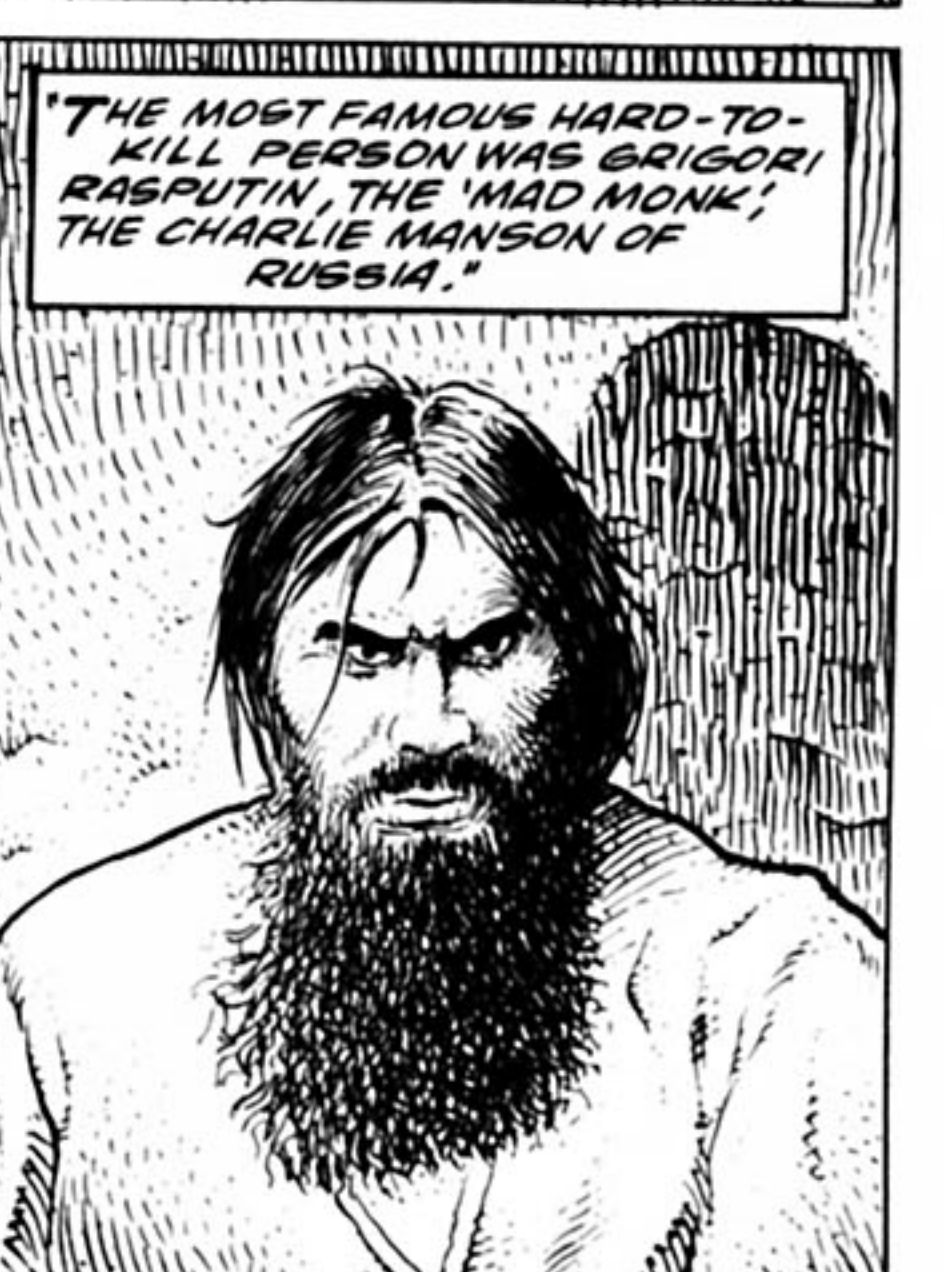
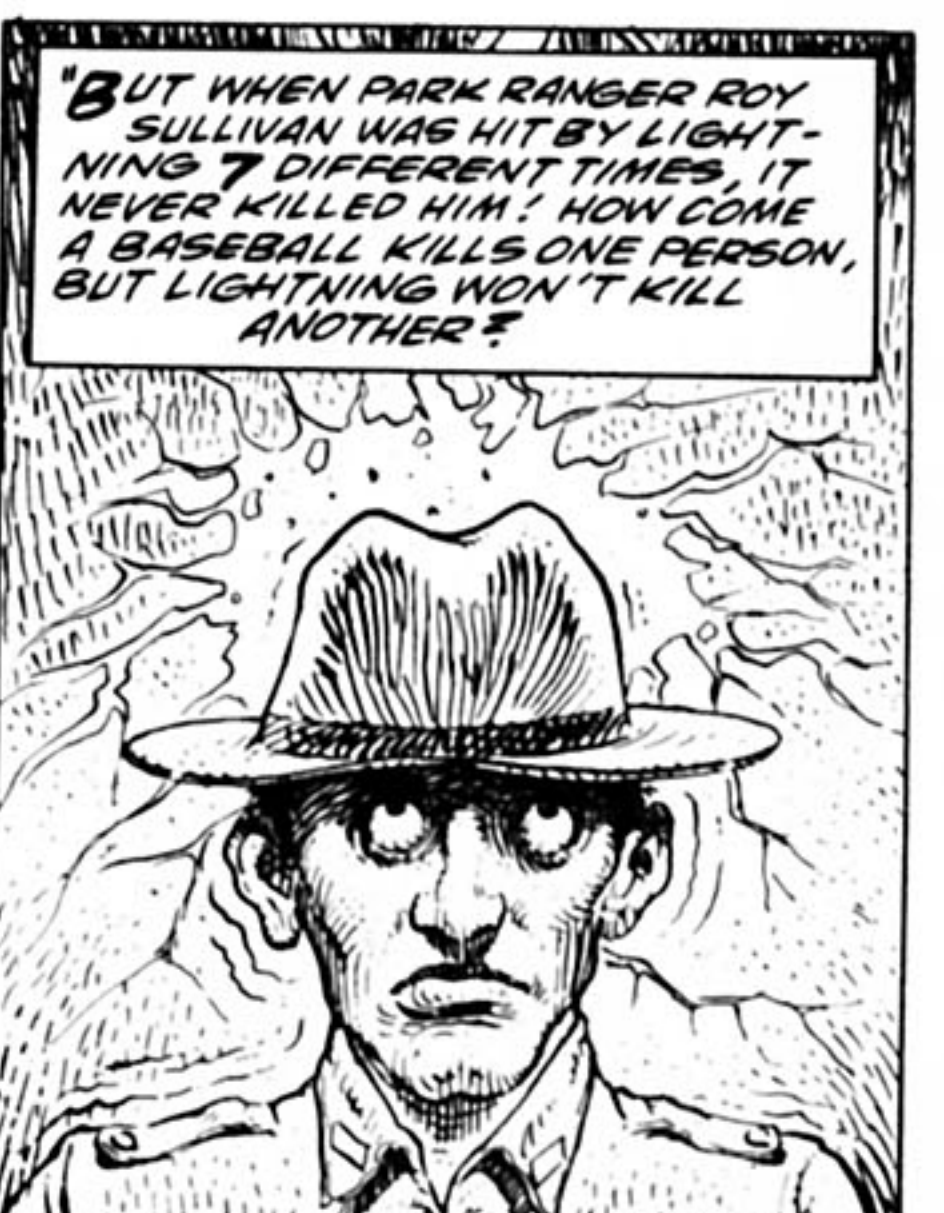
THE FIRST EIGHT PATIENTS HE "ASSISTED" WERE WOMEN, AND PEOPLE BEGAN TO WONDER ABOUT DR DEATH... WAS HE REALLY JUST A FANCY SERIAL KILLER WITH A MEDICAL DEGREE?



...BUT NUMBER 9 WAS A MAN, THEREBY REASSURING EVERYONE THAT DEATH IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY DESTROYER!







"AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 20TH CENTURY, RUSSIA WAS RULED BY A BUNCH OF INBRED HEMOPHILIACS. THEY COULD HAVE DIED AT ANY TIME, BUT THEY BELIEVED RASPUTIN COULD SAVE THEM WITH HIS PRAYERS."



"RASPUTIN WAS A HOLY MAN WHO REALLY LIKED SEX, BUT HE WAS TOTALLY STRAIGHT. HE TURNED DOWN THE VERY FETCHING PRINCE FELIX YUSUPOV."



"HELL HATH NO FURY, RIGHT? PRINCE FELIX FOUND OTHER PEOPLE WERE JEALOUS OF RASPUTIN'S POWER AT COURT AND WANTED HIM OUT OF THE WAY."



"THEY INVITED RASPUTIN TO A SMALL PARTY, WHERE THEY FED HIM POISONED CAKES. HE ATE ENOUGH TO KILL TWELVE MEN, BUT HE SEEMED FINE."



"NEXT, THEY GAVE RASPUTIN POISONED WINE. HE DRANK GLASS AFTER GLASS."



"FINALLY, PRINCE FELIX SHOT RASPUTIN. THIS JUST MADE HIM MAD."



"THEY HAD TO SHOOT HIM TWICE MORE, BEAT HIM, TIE HIM UP, AND THROW HIM IN THE RIVER BEFORE THEY COULD BE CERTAIN RASPUTIN WAS DEAD."



"THE BODY WAS RECOVERED THE NEXT DAY. AN AUTOPSY FOUND WATER IN THE LUNGS -- RASPUTIN DIED FROM DROWNING."



SO I DON'T KNOW WHY IT'S SO HARD TO KILL SOME PEOPLE...

...I GUESS IT'S JUST ONE OF THE MYSTERIES OF LIFE!



CHAPTER THREE

BIG NUMBERS

When it comes to death, there's no safety in numbers. Disasters — both natural and manmade — wars (*page 78*) and plagues (*page 68*) all take their toll. When you hear of a large number of people dying in one incident, like the 346 passengers who were killed in a single airplane crash (*page 86*), it's easy to forget that each casualty was an individual, a singular human being, perhaps with nothing at all in common with the others except for the manner of their death. The individual personalities are lost in an undifferentiated pile of corpses. Death, it seems, brings us all together, even as it tears us apart.

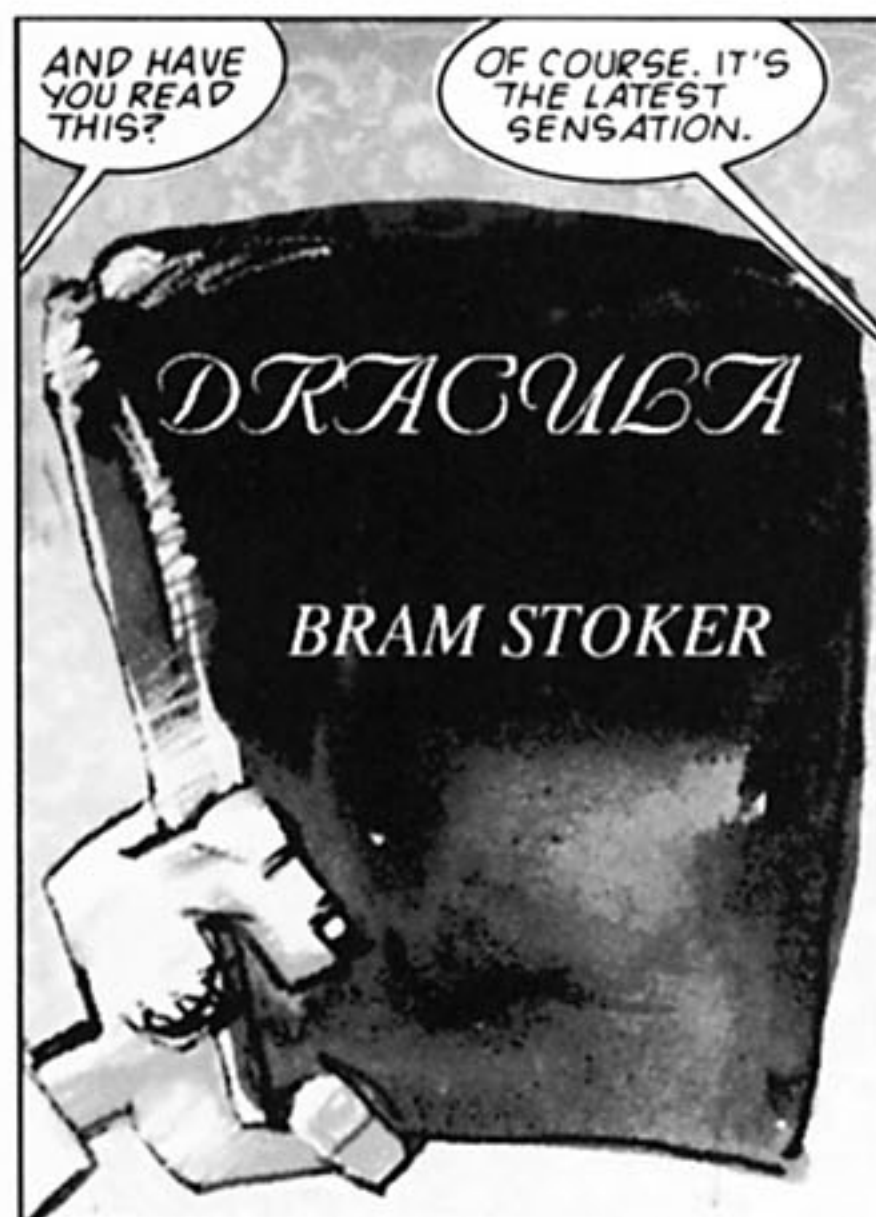
MASS DEATH















TYPHOID FEVER

SICKNESS UNTO DEATH III Typhoid MARY

"THE DISEASE OF FILTH" TYPHOID FEVER

Typhoid fever is spread when food or water is contaminated by a bacillus from human feces or urine. Millions have died of the disease, although improved sanitation makes it less common today. It is possible to be a carrier of typhoid fever without becoming sick; this was the case with "Typhoid Mary" Mallon (1870-1938).

SYMPTOMS: Fever, Insomnia, Diarrhea





TRY TO UNDER-
STAND, MARY. ALTHOUGH
YOU ARE NOT ILL YOUR-
SELF, YOU ARE A
TYPHOID CARRIER.

YER A LIAR!
I'VE GOT NO
DISEASE!



BUT YOUR GALL
BLADDER IS TEEMING
WITH TYPHOID BACTERIA.
ALLOW US TO OPERATE,
AND WE'LL SET YOU
FREE!

LIAR! LIAR!
I'LL NIVER LET YER
CUT ME!



"SINCE SHE REFUSED THE
OPERATION, MARY WILL
BE CONFINED TO A COTTAGE
ON NORTH BROTHER
ISLAND. SHE WILL BE
COMFORTABLE, BUT
ISOLATED."

"I'M SURE IT'S
FOR THE BEST,
DR. SOPHER."



1910

GENTLEMEN, I'M CERTAIN
MARY WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR
THE 1903 OUTBREAK IN
ITHACA-- 1400 CASES-- AS
WELL AS DOZENS OF
DEATHS!

SHE CARRIES
TYPHOID FEVER,
AND WILL BE A
DANGER TO
OTHERS WHEREVER
SHE GOES.



SIRS, I'VE BEEN KEPT FOUR YEARS UPON
THAT ISLAND, AN' IT'S NOT RIGHT! SET
ME FREE AN' I'LL WORK AS A
LAUNDRESS AN' NIVER COOK
ANOTHER MEAL.

VERY
WELL, MISS
MALLON,
YOU MAY
GO.



SOON
AFTER...

ANOTHER OUTBREAK, SIR.
THE FAMILY EMPLOYED A
HEAVYSET IRISH COOK
NAMED MARY.

YE GODS!
WILL THAT
WOMAN
NEVER
UNDERSTAND?



BEEKINS, WE MUST FIND HER! SHE MAY
CHANGE JOBS, SHE MAY CHANGE HER
NAME, SHE MAY HIDE FROM US--

--IT MAY TAKE
YEARS, BUT WE
MUST FIND
TYPHOID MARY!

I'LL BEGIN
AT ONCE,
SIR!



1915

HERE SHE IS,
SIR-- MARY
"BROWN,"
THE COOK.

PLEASE
DON'T SEND
ME BACK
TO THE
ISLAND,
SIR!

I'M SORRY,
MARY. YOU LEAVE
ME NO CHOICE.



MARY WAS RETURNED TO NORTH
BROTHER ISLAND, WHERE SHE
LIVED ALONE UNTIL HER DEATH
IN 1938. HER BURIAL WAS
ARRANGED AND PAID FOR BY
THE NEW YORK CITY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.



SICKNESS UNTO DEATH IV:

THE FUTURE



ON MARCH 11, 1918 ALBERT MITCHELL REPORTED TO THE INFIRMARY AT CAMP FUNSTON, KANSAS. HIS SYMPTOMS WERE ACHINESS, A LOW FEVER, AND A SORE THROAT.



BUT THE SOLDIER'S ILLNESS TURNED OUT TO BE NO ORDINARY FLU, FOR IT LED QUICKLY TO PNEUMONIA AND DEATH.



IN JUST 2 MONTHS IT SPREAD AROUND THE WORLD.

37 MILLION PEOPLE DIED OF THIS SO-CALLED "SPANISH FLU" -- THE WORST PLAGUE IN HISTORY.



NO ONE KNOWS WHY THIS VIRUS WAS SO DEADLY, OR WHY IT SUDDENLY STOPPED KILLING IN 1919.

TODAY, HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS DIE OF AIDS, CAUSED BY THE HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS.



NO ONE KNOWS HOW THE AIDS VIRUS AROSE, EITHER.

ONE THEORY IS THAT HIV CAME FROM A MONKEY VIRUS WHEN MONKEY TISSUE WAS USED TO DEVELOP A HUMAN POLIO VACCINE.



THE MONKEY VIRUS MUTATED INSIDE THE HUMAN BODY AND BECAME THE DEADLY HIV, WHICH IS NOW SPREAD BY CONTACT WITH BODILY FLUIDS.



IN THE SUMMER OF 1993, NAVAHO PEOPLE IN NEW MEXICO BEGAN TO DIE OF A MYSTERIOUS FLU-LIKE ILLNESS.



DOCTORS THINK THE DISEASE MAY HAVE BEEN CAUSED BY A RODENT VIRUS, SPREAD WHEN RODENT DROPPINGS CRUMBED INTO DUST AND WERE INHALED BY PEOPLE.



EXTREME MUTATIONS CAN OCCUR WHEN VIRUSES ARE TRANSMITTED FROM ONE SPECIES INTO ANOTHER, AND THESE MUTATED VIRUSES MAY CAUSE VIRULENT NEW DISEASES.



IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, WHERE CHICKEN FECES ARE USED TO FEED PIGS, AND THE PIGS' FECES USED TO FEED FISH, VIRUS-SWAPPING ENDANGERS THE HUMAN FOOD SUPPLY.



OF COURSE, THE MOST EFFICIENT WAY TO INTRODUCE ANIMAL VIRUSES DIRECTLY INTO HUMANS IS BY TRANSPLANTING ORGANS. REMEMBER BABY FAY AND HER BABOON HEART?



RECENT ANIMAL-TO-HUMAN TRANSPLANTS HAVE INCLUDED BABOON LIVERS IN PITTSBURGH AND PIG LIVERS IN LOS ANGELES.



ANOTHER VIRAL CANDIDATE FOR THE NEXT PANDEMIC IS SMALLPOX. UNTIL IT WAS ERADICATED IN THE 1970'S, SMALLPOX KILLED, BLINDED OR HIDEOUSLY DISFIGURED TENS OF MILLIONS OF PEOPLE.



THE LAST TWO REMAINING SAMPLES OF SMALLPOX VIRUS ARE BEING KEPT FROZEN IN ATLANTA, GA AND IN MOSCOW.

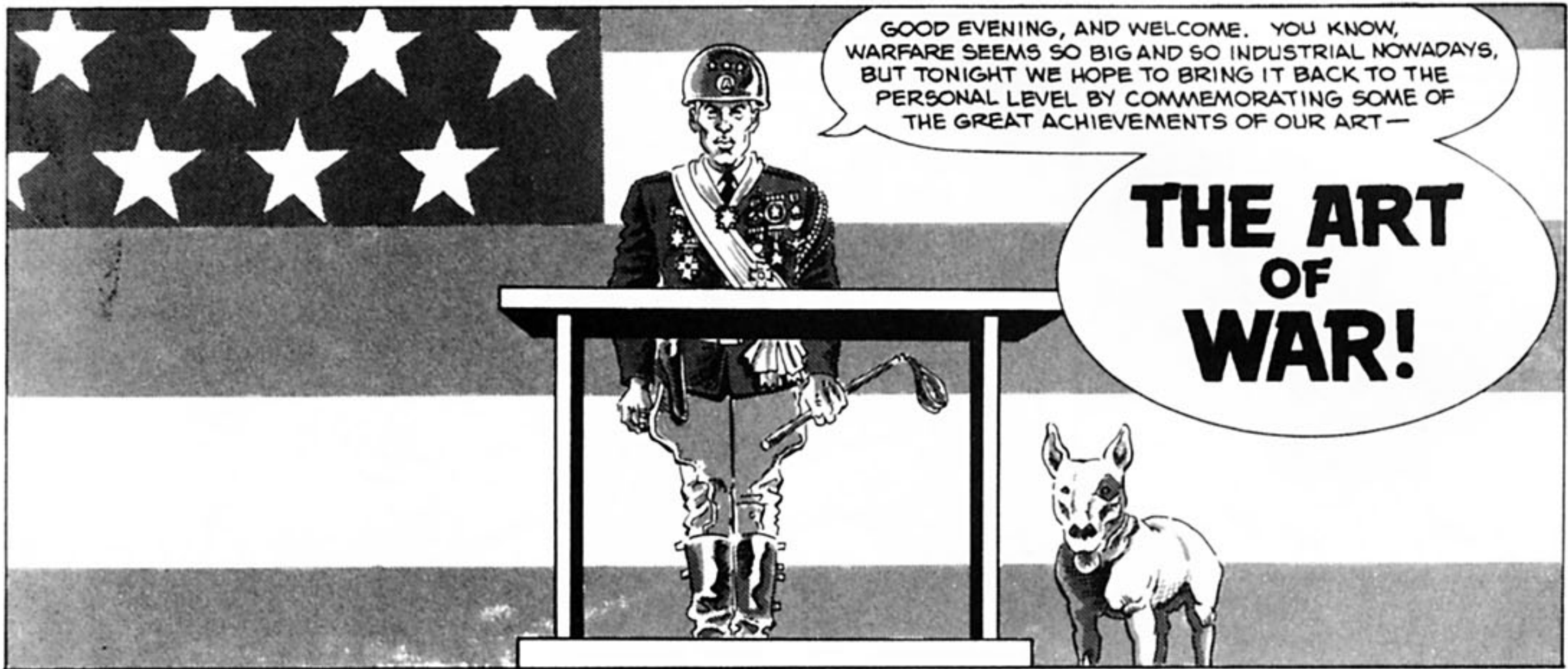


THE WORLD IS SAFE FROM SMALLPOX - AS LONG AS THE SAMPLES NEVER THAW OUT.

IF THEY DID, HOWEVER, THE DEATH TOLL WOULD BE ENORMOUS. BUT THE EXTERMINATION OF HUMANITY BY SMALLPOX IS UNLIKELY.



PROBABLY A MUTATED ANIMAL VIRUS WILL ULTIMATELY SIGNAL THE DEATH KNEEL FOR MANKIND.







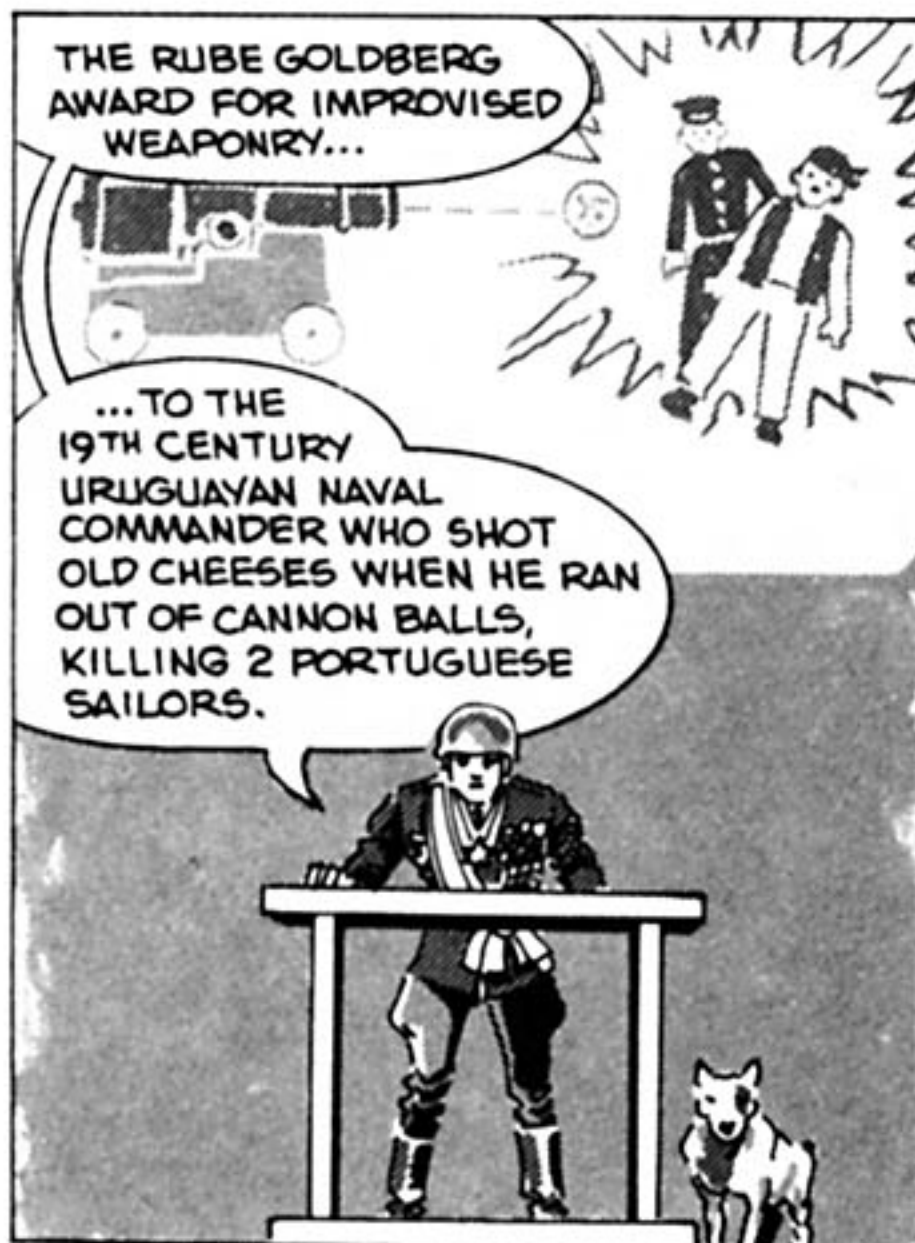
...IT'S ALSO A SCIENCE. MODERN ADVANCES IN TECHNOLOGY BRING US BETTER, MORE EFFICIENT METHODS OF MASS DESTRUCTION EVERY DAY.



"THE SPECIAL AWARD FOR CHEMICAL WEAPONS GOES TO THE TARTARS, CIRCA 1350, WHO TOOK THE BODIES OF PLAGUE VICTIMS..."



"...AND CATAPULTED THEM INTO WHATEVER CITIES THEY WERE BESIEGING."

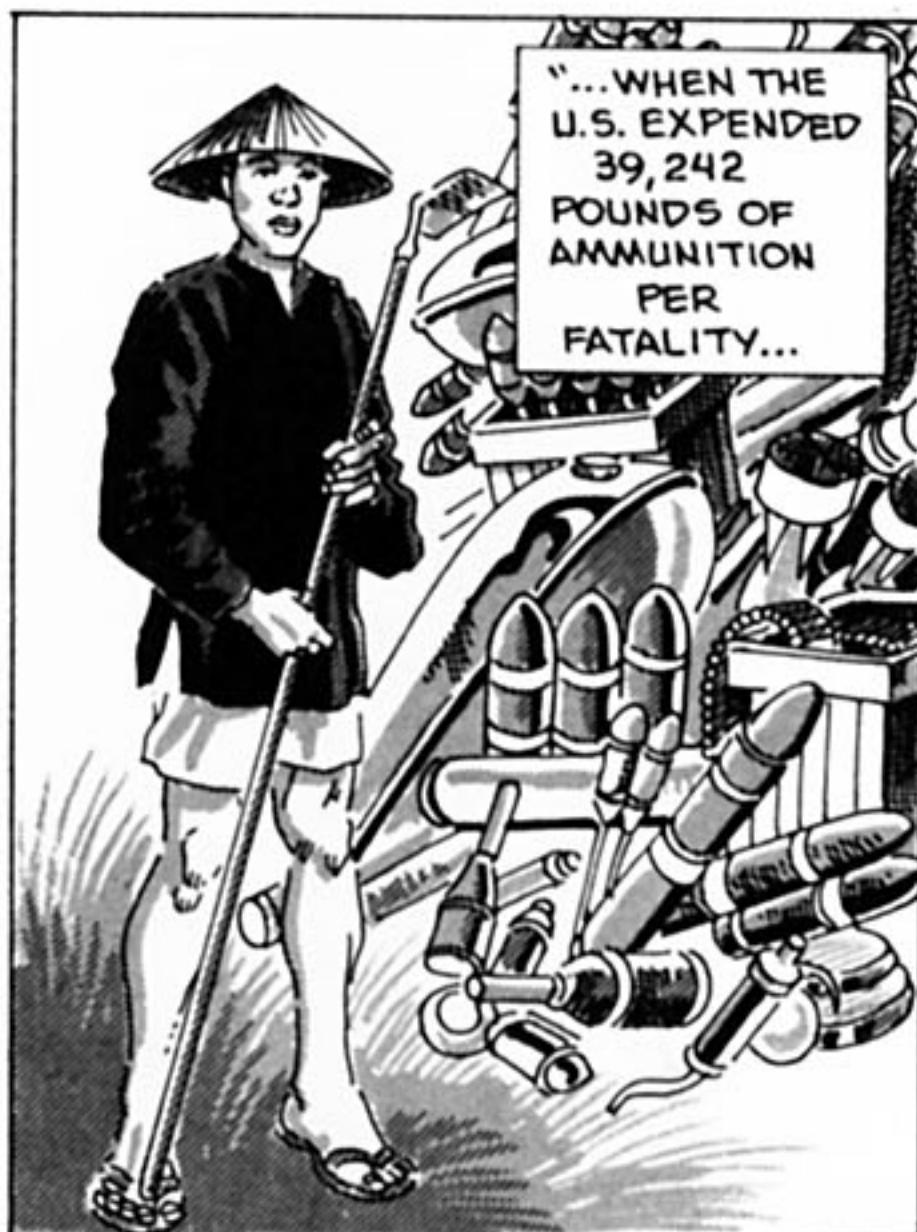


THE RUBE GOLDBERG AWARD FOR IMPROVISED WEAPONRY...

...TO THE 19TH CENTURY URUGUAYAN NAVAL COMMANDER WHO SHOT OLD CHEESES WHEN HE RAN OUT OF CANNON BALLS, KILLING 2 PORTUGUESE SAILORS.



THE MEASURING CUP COMMEMORATIVE TROPHY GOES TONIGHT TO THE RECORD-BREAKING VIETNAM WAR-



"...WHEN THE U.S. EXPENDED 39,242 POUNDS OF AMMUNITION PER FATALITY..."



"...AT A COST OF \$2,436,657 FOR EACH ENEMY DEATH! NOW THAT'S AMERICAN KNOW-HOW AT WORK!"



BUT LET'S NOT FORGET THAT SOME OF THE BEST DEATHS IN WAR ARE FREE.

UP UNTIL WORLD WAR I, THE NUMBER ONE KILLER OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS IN COMBAT WAS - DISEASE!



"YES, WHEN YOU ASSEMBLE A LARGE NUMBER OF STRANGERS IN CROWDED, UNSANITARY CONDITIONS, YOU NOT ONLY HAVE AN ARMY, YOU ALSO HAVE THE VERY FINEST BREEDING GROUND FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASE!"

"SIXTY PERCENT OF THE MILITARY CASUALTIES IN THE CIVIL WAR WERE FROM DISEASE—THE WORST FATALITY RATE OF ANY WAR IN U.S. HISTORY."



YOU KNOW, WHEN WE THINK OF WAR, WE NATURALLY THINK OF DEFENSE.



THERE'S NEVER BEEN A WAR WHERE EITHER SIDE WAS THE AGGRESSOR—BOTH SIDES ARE ALWAYS DEFENDING THEMSELVES AGAINST SOMETHING.

YOU GET YOUR POLITICIANS AND YOUR DIPLOMATS JUSTIFYING EVERY MOVE THEY MAKE, PRETTY SOON PEOPLE FORGET THE WHOLE PURPOSE OF WAR—TO KILL!



"THAT'S WHY I TAKE GREAT PLEASURE IN THIS LAST AWARD—FOR MOST USELESS BATTLE. AND THE NOMINEES ARE—ANTIETAM, SEPTEMBER 17, 1862:

"23,110 TROOPS KILLED, THE BLOODIEST SINGLE DAY IN THE ENTIRE CIVIL WAR—AND THE BATTLE WAS A DRAW.



"AND THE BATTLE OF VERDUN, WHERE ON FEBRUARY 21, 1916, GERMAN TROOPS ATTACKED THE FRENCH FORTRESS. AFTER 10 MONTHS OF CONSTANT SHOOTING, SHELLING, AND POISON GAS ATTACKS...

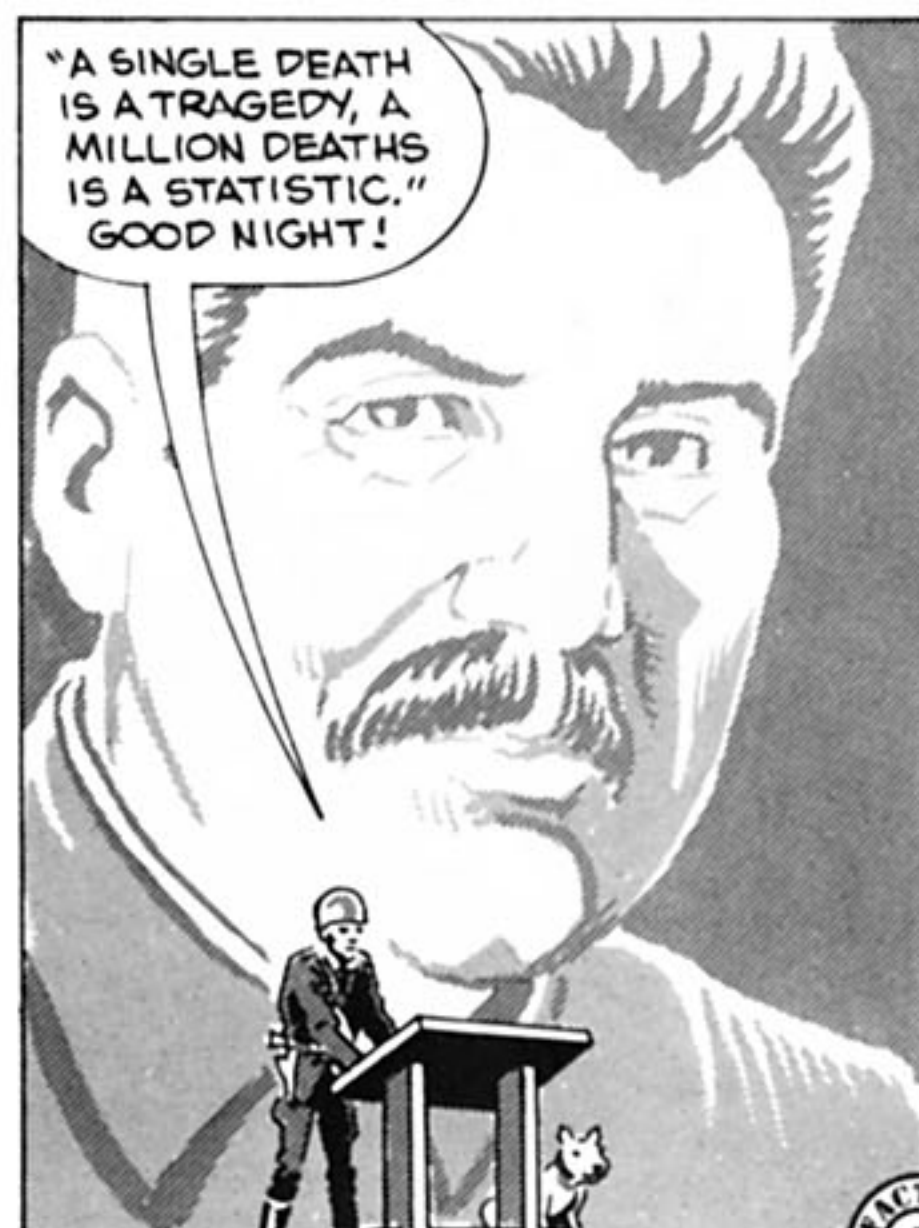


"...THERE WERE MORE THAN 1,000,000 FRENCH AND GERMAN CASUALTIES, AND THE BATTLE LINES WERE ESSENTIALLY UNCHANGED!"

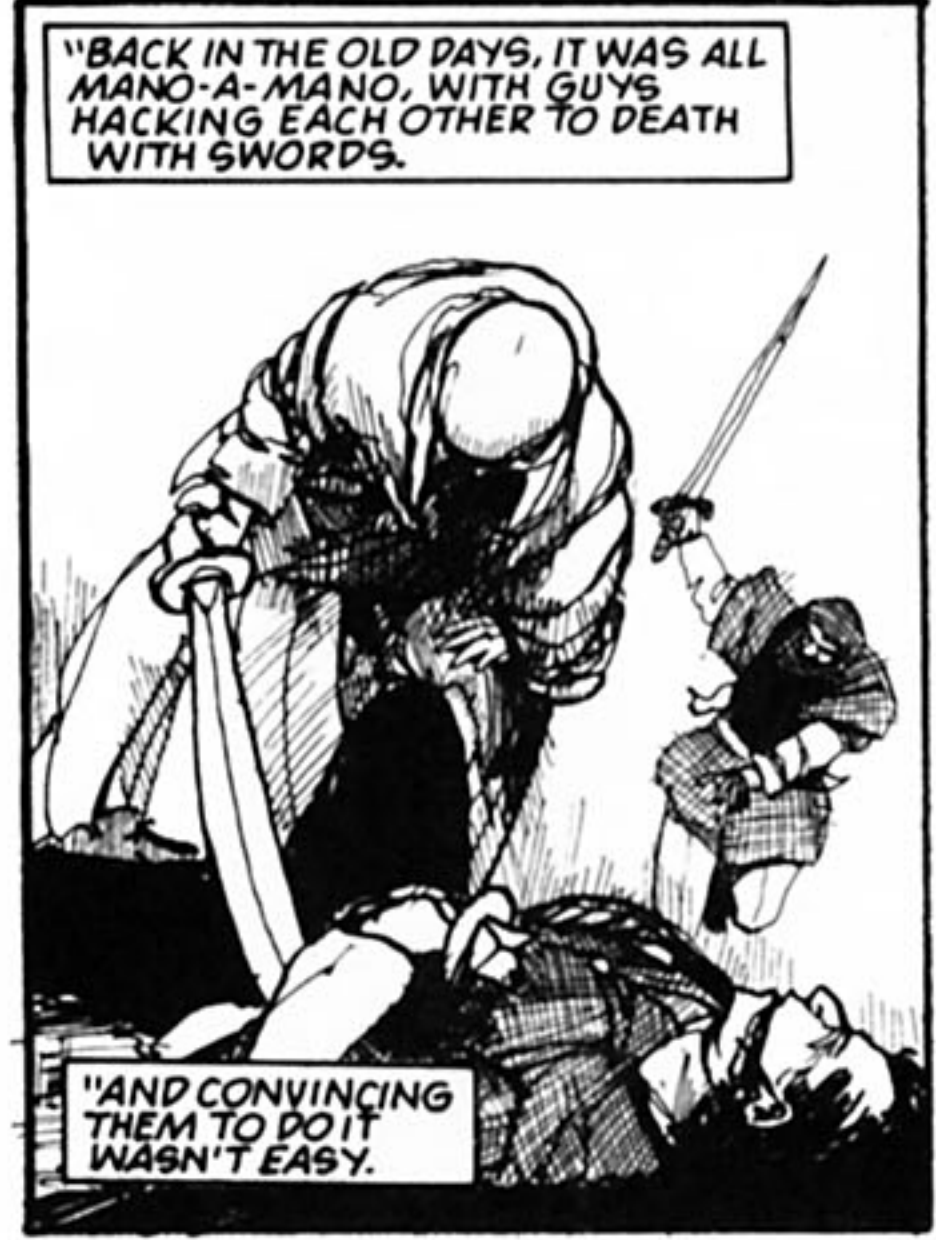
AND THE WINNER IS... VERDUN! THANK YOU ALL FOR JOINING US TONIGHT—IN THE WORDS OF THAT GREAT GENERAL, JOE STALIN...



"A SINGLE DEATH IS A TRAGEDY, A MILLION DEATHS IS A STATISTIC." GOOD NIGHT!



ONWARD (YOUR RELIGION HERE) SOLDIERS







"AND IN 1483 THE POPE THOUGHT IT WAS GOD'S WILL THAT HE SHOULD KICK OFF THE SPANISH INQUISITION BY APPOINTING TOMAS DE TORQUEMADA TO BE GRAND INQUISITOR OF SPAIN."



"IN 1492, TORQUEMADA GOT KING FERDINAND AND QUEEN ISABELLA TO KICK ALL THE JEWS OUT OF THE COUNTRY."



"THE ONES WHO DIDN'T LEAVE GOT ARRESTED-- NOBODY EVER TOLD THEM FOR WHAT CRIME. THEN THEY WERE THROWN IN PRISON AND TOLD TO 'CONFESS.'"



"THEY HAD THREE MAIN METHODS OF GETTING THESE 'CONFESSIONS'-- THE GARRUCHA..."

TELL THE TRUTH!

TELL THE TRUTH!



"...THE GAROTTE..."

TELL THE TRUTH!

TELL THE TRUTH!



"...AND THE TOCA, OR WATER TORTURE."

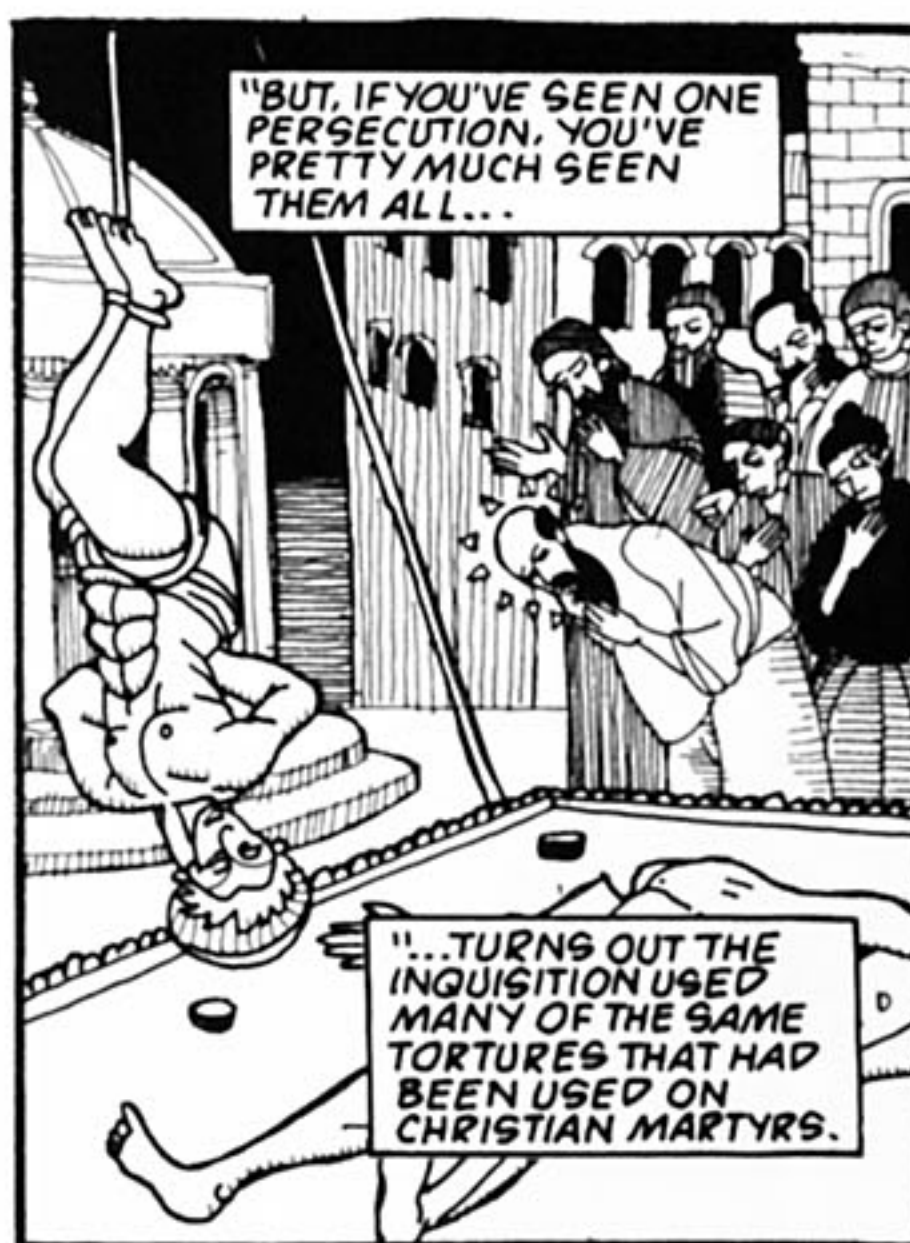
TELL...

...THE TRUTH!



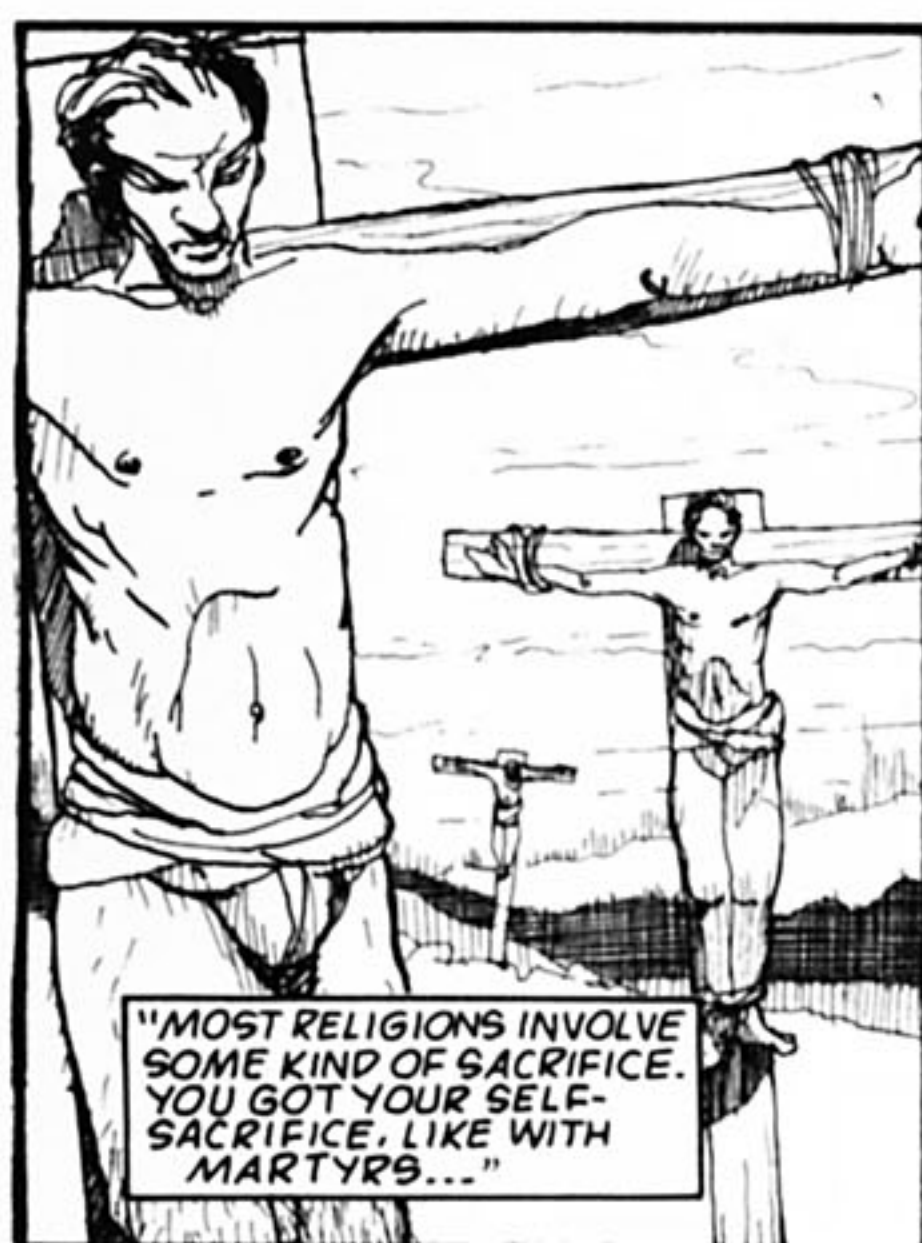
"SOME 90,000 JEWS WERE TORTURED, NEARLY 9,000 KILLED, BY ORDER OF TORQUEMADA..."

"...WHO WAS, IT TURNS OUT, FROM A JEWISH FAMILY HIMSELF."



"BUT, IF YOU'VE SEEN ONE PERSECUTION, YOU'VE PRETTY MUCH SEEN THEM ALL..."

"...TURNS OUT THE INQUISITION USED MANY OF THE SAME TORTURES THAT HAD BEEN USED ON CHRISTIAN MARTYRS."



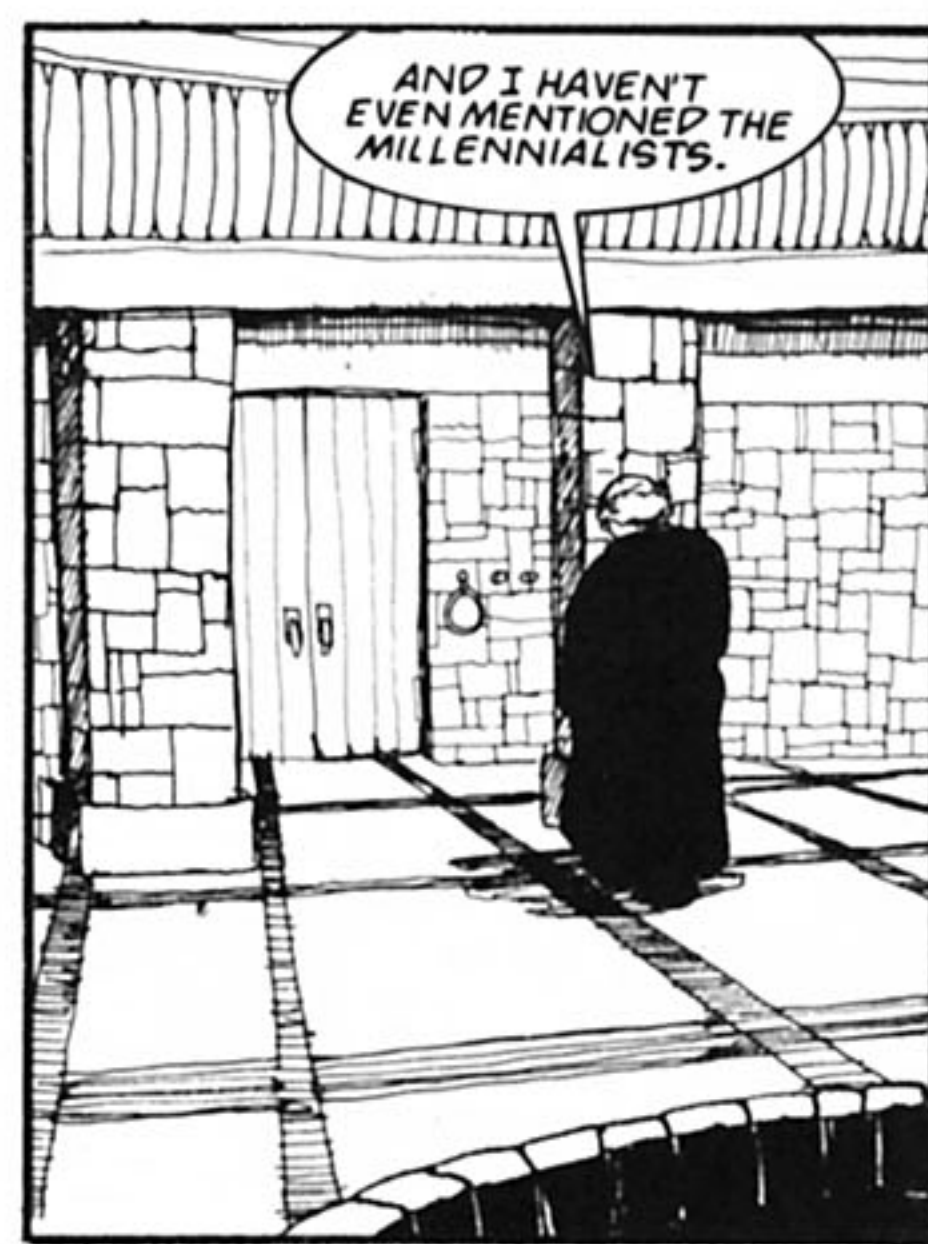
"MOST RELIGIONS INVOLVE SOME KIND OF SACRIFICE. YOU GOT YOUR SELF-SACRIFICE, LIKE WITH MARTYRS..."



"...AND THEN YOU GOT THE INVOLUNTARY KIND OF HUMAN SACRIFICE. WHATEVER, IT'S ALL DONE FOR GOD, RIGHT?"



"ALSO THERE'S A MORE ACTIVE SELF-SACRIFICE--LIKE AT MASADA IN 73 A.D., WHEN 1,000 JEWS KILLED THEMSELVES RATHER THAN BE TAKEN BY ROMANS."



AND I HAVEN'T EVEN MENTIONED THE MILLENNIALISTS.



"FROM THEIR READINGS OF THE BIBLE THEY DETERMINE THE DATE OF THE END OF THE WORLD."

"THEN THEY KILL THEMSELVES. GO FIGURE."



BUT SOMETIMES A RELIGIOUS DEATH IS JUST AN ACCIDENT. IN MECCA, IN 1990, FOR EXAMPLE.

FIFTY THOUSAND OF ALLAH'S PILGRIMS WERE PACKED TIGHT AS SARDINES INTO AN UNDERGROUND TUNNEL THAT LED INTO A SACRED SHRINE WHEN SOMEBODY PANICKED AND--



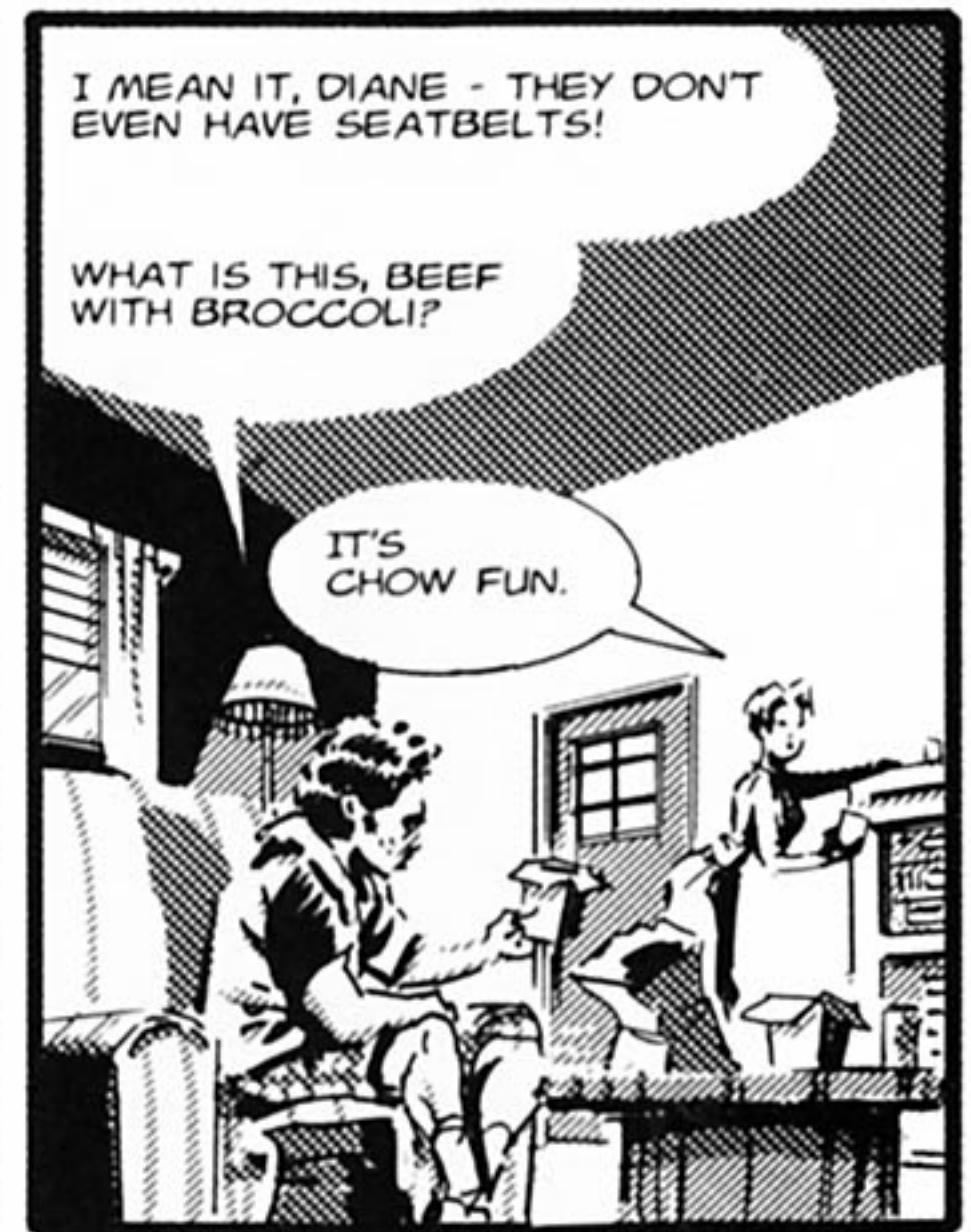
"--ANOTHER 1,426 DEAD SOULS."



YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT THE RELIGION THAT KILLS THESE PEOPLE.



THEY DIE FROM THINKING SOMEHOW GOD'LL LOVE 'EM BETTER DEAD THAN ALIVE!



CAR ACCIDENTS HAPPEN EVERY DAY-ALL THE TIME-PEOPLE *DIE* IN THEM! YOU DON'T EVEN NEED TWO CARS TO HAVE AN ACCIDENT, JUST ONE CAR BY ITSELF CAN KILL YOU!



"THE CAR LEFT THE ROAD" - WHAT DOES *THAT* MEAN?



"THEY NEVER SAY 'THE AIRPLANE LEFT THE SKY.'"



"AIRPLANES! AIRPLANES ARE THE *WORST!* ONE MINUTE YOU'RE IN THIS BIG METAL TUBE IN THE SKY AND IT'S 1974 AND YOU'RE LEAVING PARIS..."



"... AND THE NEXT MINUTE THE REAR CARGO DOOR BLOWS OUT AND THERE'S LITTLE PIECES OF YOU ALL OVER THE FOREST! 346 PEOPLE DEAD!



"IT'S TRUE THERE AREN'T THAT MANY DEATHS IN CAR ACCIDENTS - THE MOST I REMEMBER WAS 11 IN ONE CRASH, IN KENTUCKY IN THE '50S."



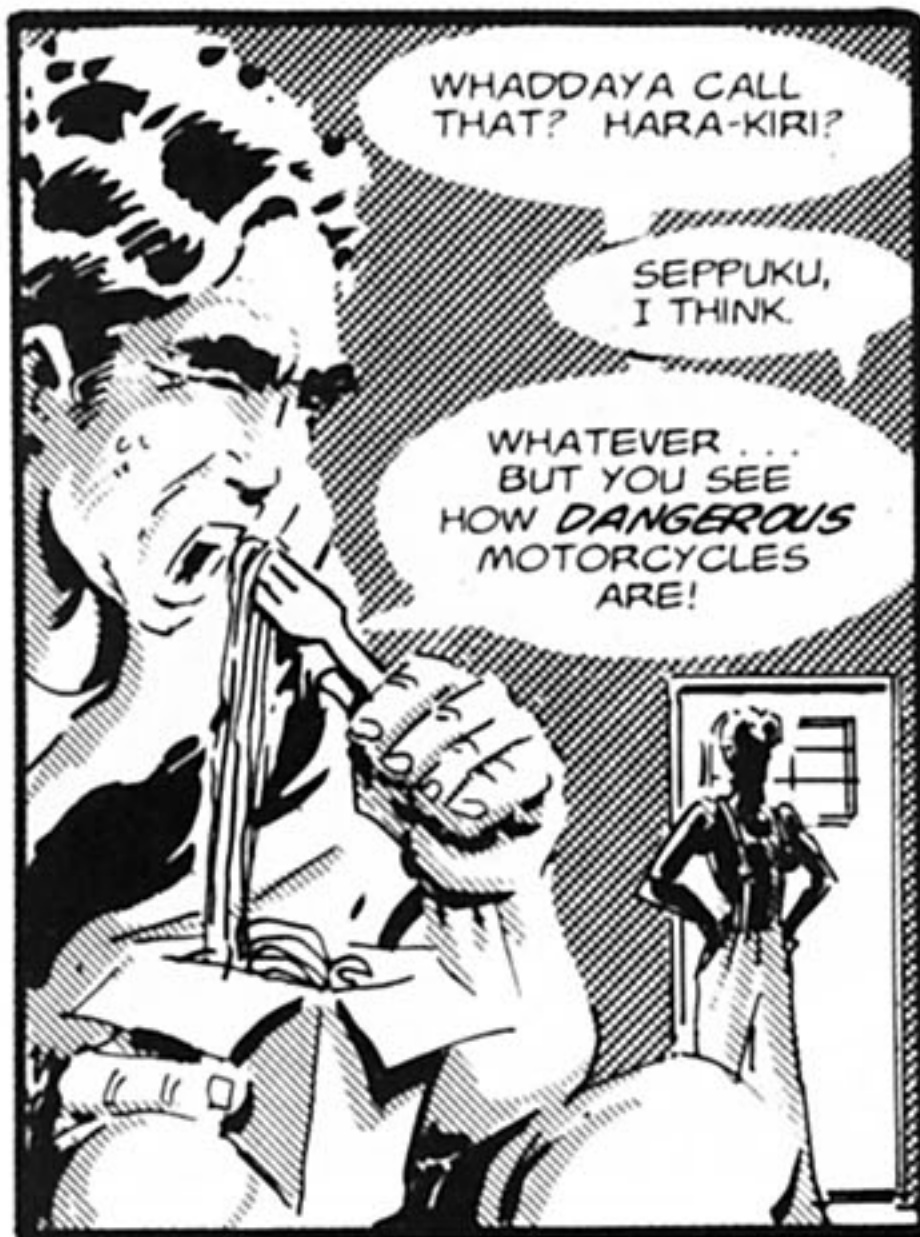
"BUT THE VERY FIRST CAR IN ENGLAND, IN 1896, WAS ON EXHIBIT AND THIS ONE WOMAN PANICKED, AND THE CAR RAN OVER HER AND CRUSHED HER HEAD!



"THAT WAS THE FIRST MOTOR VEHICLE FATALITY EVER! AND THE FIRST MOTORCYCLE DEATH WAS IN ENGLAND TOO, IN 1899, WHEN THIS GUY JUST *FELL* OFF THE BIKE."

"YEAH, MOTORCYCLES ARE DEADLY! I HEARD ABOUT THIS CYCLIST IN JAPAN, HE HAD A LITTLE FENDER-BENDER ACCIDENT, AND HIS BALLPOINT PEN PUNCTURED HIS GUT!"





STATISTICALLY, TRAINS ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN AIRPLANES, YOU KNOW.

I KNOW!
I KNOW!

"YOU'RE THINKING OF MONDANE, FRANCE, 1917, RIGHT? THE FRENCH TROOP TRAIN THAT CRASHED AND BURNED COMING OVER THE ALPS, 543 DEAD!"

"UMMMM, NOT REALLY."

"OH, RIGHT. OKAY - THE BIG AMTRAK CRASH A COUPLE YEARS AGO WHEN THE ENGINEER WAS WATCHING THE FOOTBALL GAME ON TV WHILE HE DROVE THE TRAIN!"



"THEN THERE'S THE WEIRDEST TRAIN DISASTER EVER, THE 8017 OUT OF NAPLES AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II!"



SONO TUTTI MORTI!

"THE TRACKS WERE ICY AND IT GOT STUCK IN A TUNNEL, AND IT JUST SAT IN THERE BURNING COAL FOR *HOURS*."



SONO TUTTI MORTI!

"THE CABOOSE DIDN'T GET INTO THE TUNNEL, SO ONE GUY LIVED, BUT 521 PEOPLE DIED OF CARBON MONOXIDE POISONING!"



"NO, WAIT! THE *WEIRDEST* TRAIN ACCIDENT WAS IN THE 1850S WHEN THIS HUDSON RIVER RAILROAD PASSENGER TRAIN ..."



"... HIT A BOAT THAT WAS BLOWN ONTO THE TRACKS DURING A STORM ON THE RIVER!



"BOATS! BOATS ARE ALWAYS HITTING THINGS - THEY HIT AN ICEBERG OR ANOTHER BOAT OR A TORPEDO OR SOMETHING, AND THEY SINK LIKE ROCKS!



"IN 1969 NINE PEOPLE DIED ON A RIVER IN ZAMBIA WHEN THEIR BOAT WAS HIT BY RAMPAGING HIPPOPOTAMUSES!"



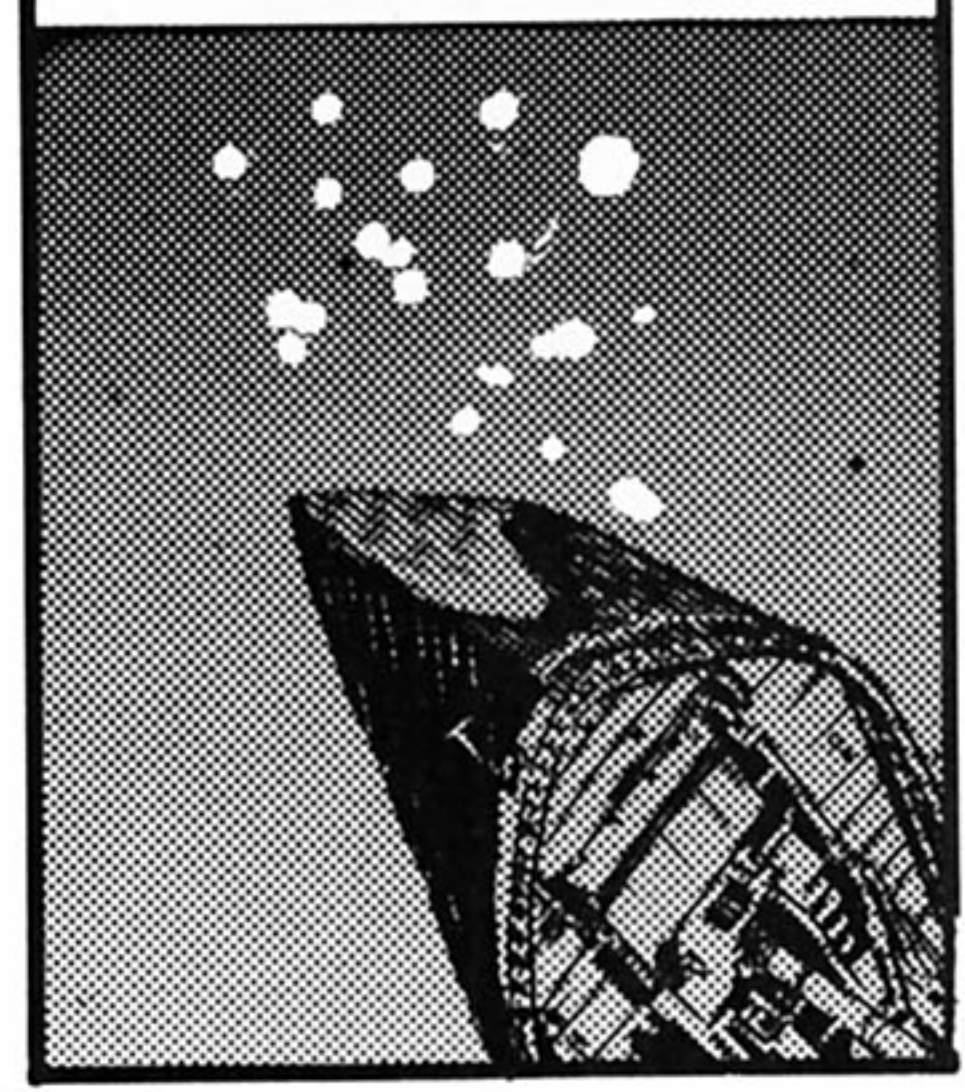
I'M TELLING YOU, *NOTHING'S* SAFE! RAMPAGING HIPPOPOTAMUSES! THESE HIPPOS WERE *WILDING*!



AND THE CAR FERRY! THE CAR FERRY FROM ENGLAND TO FRANCE! A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, THEY FORGOT TO CLOSE THE DOORS!



"AND IT FILLED UP WITH WATER! THE BOAT LEFT THE SURFACE OF THE OCEAN! PEOPLE DROWNED!"



SEE, DIANE, THAT'S WHY I NEVER GO ANYWHERE! CARS, PLANES, TRAINS, BOATS - THEY'RE ALL TOO DANGEROUS!

BUT, BILL, DON'T YOU KNOW THAT MOST ACCIDENTS HAPPEN IN THE HOME?



YARRRGH!

WHAT?! WHAT IS IT?



I FOUND THE FORK.

OH, BILL!



CHAPTER FOUR

PECULIAR PASSINGS

WEIRD DEATH

Did you turn to this chapter first? A lot of people will. This is the “guilty pleasures” chapter, true stories of people who have died in such *extremely* bizarre ways that you hardly need to know anything more about them than the manner of their death. Each of these deaths — the auto worker who was killed by a robot (*page 98*), the woman who died from eating pennies (*page 99*), or the many too-weird-to-be-true documented cases of spontaneous human combustion (*page 92*) — undoubtedly seemed tragic to grieving friends and family, but the rest of us can’t help but take perverse delight in these unique modes of departure. Of course, these mini-tales also provide a measure of reassurance to readers, since the odds are very, very good that neither you nor anyone you know will ever die like these people did. So go ahead — indulge the secret, greasy thrill of Weird Death. You’re soaking in it.

BIZARRE! MYSTERIOUS! TRUE!

SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION!



THE STRANGEST DEATH OF ALL IS SPONTANEOUS HUMAN COMBUSTION - SHC - WHEN A PERSON BURSTS INTO FLAME FOR NO APPARENT REASON.



SCIENTISTS REFUSE TO ADMIT THAT SHC EXISTS, BUT THERE ARE MORE THAN 200 CASES RECORDED SINCE 1600.



SHC VICTIMS ARE FOUND WITH THEIR BODIES CONSUMED BY FIRE - BUT OFTEN THEIR HANDS AND FEET ARE INTACT.



TO THOROUGHLY DESTROY A HUMAN BODY, THE FIRE WOULD HAVE TO BURN AT MORE THAN 2000° F.



YET FURNITURE SURROUNDING THE BODY IS USUALLY UNHARMED.



JUST FALLING ASLEEP WITH A LIT CIGARETTE WON'T DO IT.



THE TYPICAL SHC VICTIM IS AN
OLDER PERSON LIVING
ALONE.



MISS EDITH THOMPSON, 2/14/72,
STAFFORDSHIRE, ENGLAND.

BUT SOME ARE YOUNG.



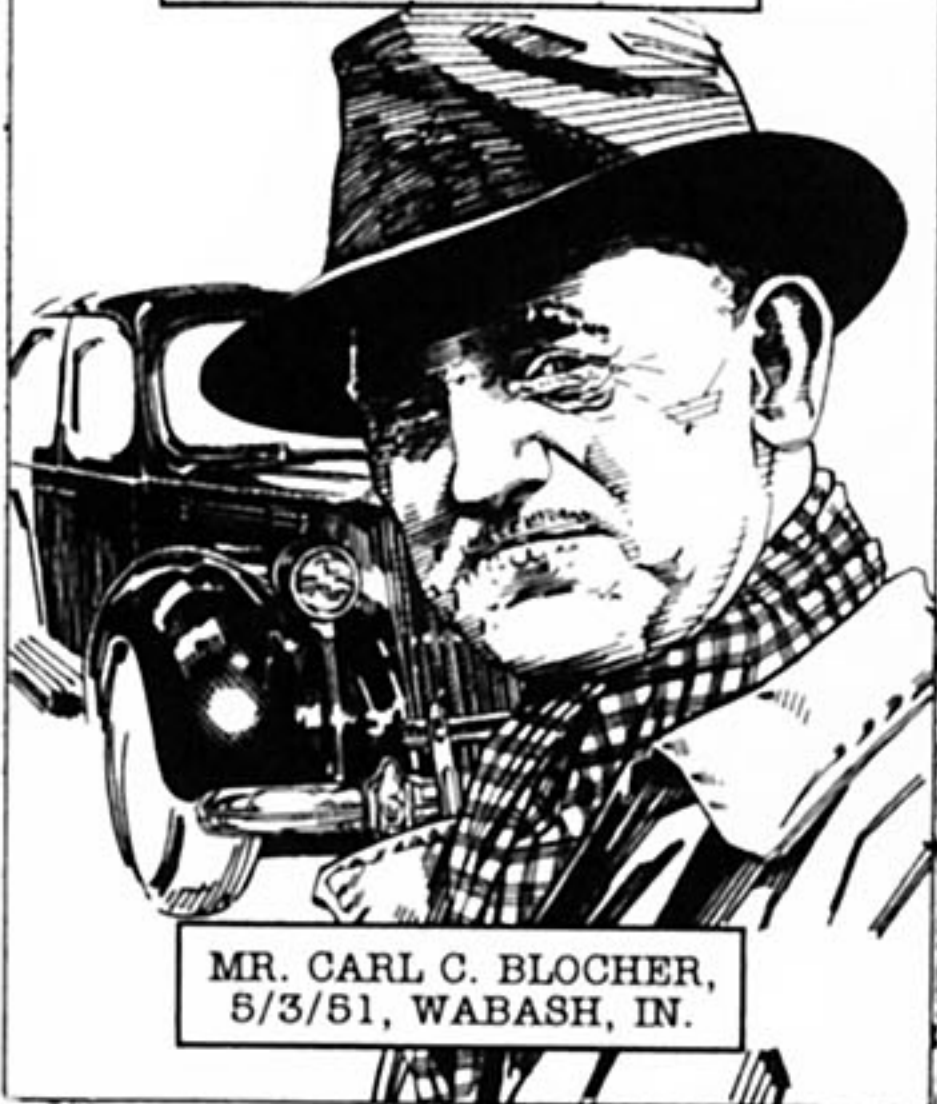
PETER SEATON, 1/3/39, LONDON,
ENGLAND.

MANY OF THE VICTIMS
ARE WOMEN.



MRS. MARTIN, 5/18/57,
WEST PHILADELPHIA, PA.

BUT ALMOST AS MANY
ARE MEN.

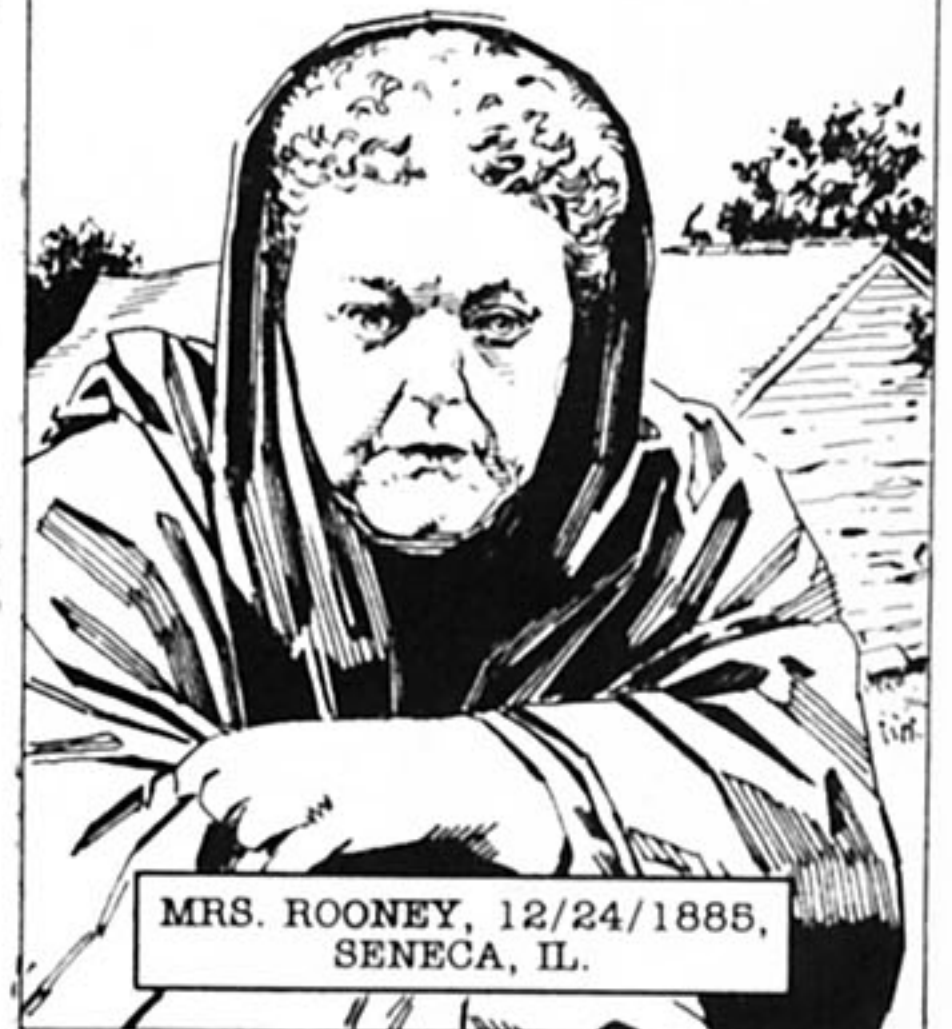


MR. CARL C. BLOCHER,
5/3/51, WABASH, IN.

THEY ALL BURNED!!



MOST WERE HEAVYSET.



MRS. ROONEY, 12/24/1885,
SENECA, IL.

SOME WERE THIN.



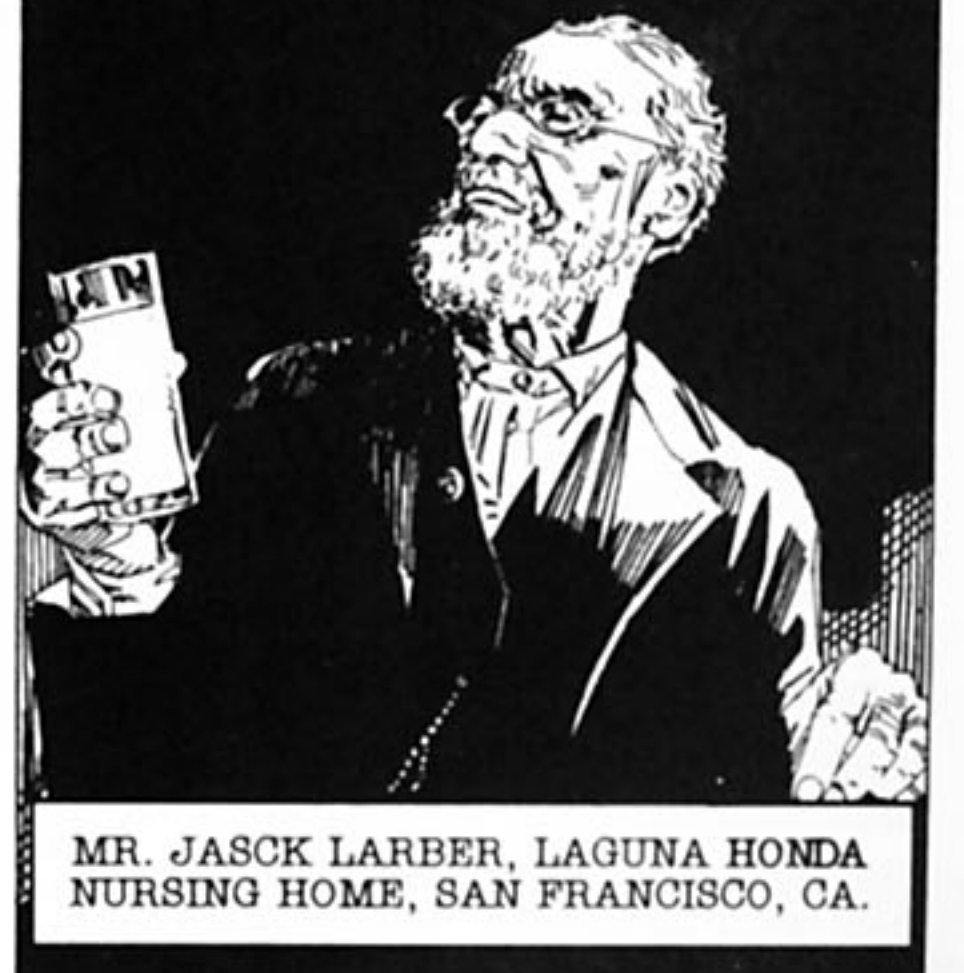
MRS. FRANCOISE PRICE, 2/14/78,
HOVE, ENGLAND.

MANY WERE ALCOHOLICS.



MRS. GRACE PETT, 4/9/1744,
IPSWICH, ENGLAND.

SOME DIDN'T DRINK
AT ALL.



MR. JASCK LARBER, LAGUNA HONDA
NURSING HOME, SAN FRANCISCO, CA.

THE CASE OF MRS. MARY REESER OF ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA IS WELL-DOCUMENTED.



MRS. REESER, A WIDOW, LIVED NEAR HER SON AND HIS FAMILY. ON JULY 1, 1951, SHE SPENT THE DAY WITH THEM.



HER SON DROPPED BY HER APARTMENT AROUND 8:30 THAT NIGHT.



SHE TOLD HIM SHE WAS GOING TO TAKE TWO SLEEPING PILLS AND GO TO BED EARLY.



THE LANDLADY STOPPED IN AT ABOUT 9:00 PM.



AT 5:00 AM THE LANDLADY SMELLED SMOKE, BUT SHE WENT BACK TO SLEEP.



IN THE MORNING, SHE WENT TO MRS. REESER'S APARTMENT, BUT FOUND THE DOORKNOB TOO HOT TO TOUCH.



WHEN TWO WORKMEN RAN TO HELP OPEN THE DOOR, THEY WERE STRUCK BY A BLAST OF HOT AIR.



YET INSIDE THERE WAS NO FIRE--AND NO MRS. REESER.



THE WALLS WERE COVERED WITH GREASY SOOT; THE CLOCK WAS STOPPED AT 4:20 AM.



A PLASTIC TUMBLER IN THE BATHROOM HAD MELTED FROM THE HEAT.



LIGHT SWITCHES HAD MELTED TOO, BUT NOTHING WAS BURNING. MRS. REESER'S BED WAS UNTOUCHED.



THE ARMCHAIR WAS GONE, BUT THERE WERE A FEW THINGS LEFT WHERE IT USED TO BE.



MRS. REESER'S SKULL WAS SHRUNK TO THE SIZE OF A BASEBALL.



THERE WERE 10 POUNDS OF REMAINS FROM 175-POUND MRS. REESER.



SHE WAS IDENTIFIED BY HER LEFT FOOT, STILL INTACT IN ITS SLIPPER.



THE LOCAL POLICE, ARSON EXPERTS, AND THE FBI WERE ALL MYSTIFIED.



NO ONE EVER EXPLAINED THE FIRE THAT BURNED ONLY MRS. REESER.

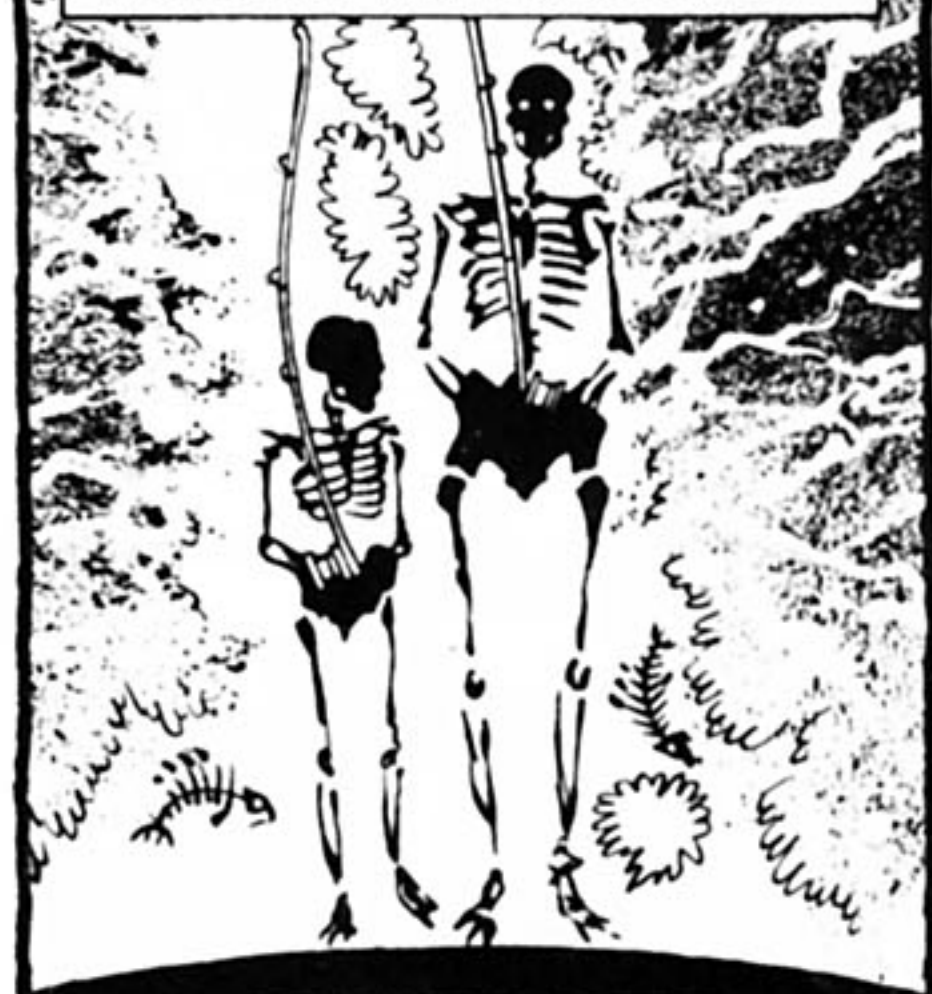




IN 1952, JOHN REID SUFFOCATED IN A VAT OF BARLEY IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BREWERY WHERE HE WORKED.



A WEST PALM BEACH WOMAN AND HER DAUGHTER WERE ELECTROCUTED WHEN LIGHTNING STRUCK A POND AND TRAVELED UP THEIR FISHING LINES.



IN JAPAN, A MAN STRANGLED A WOMAN WHEN SHE REFUSED TO APOLOGIZE FOR NOT CLEANING UP AFTER SOME STRAY CATS SHE WAS FEEDING.



NORINE B. CUSICK OF LONG ISLAND CITY, NY, COMMITTED SUICIDE IN 1989 BY CLIMBING THE FOUL POLE AT SHEA STADIUM AND JUMPING 120 FEET TO THE PLAYING FIELD.



87-YEAR-OLD ALGY TAYLOR OF BERKSHIRE, ENGLAND WAS REPORTEDLY EATEN BY PIGS IN 1988.



A DALLAS, TEXAS WOMAN DIED IN 1983 FROM LEAD POISONING CAUSED BY A BULLET LEFT LODGED IN HER KNEE.



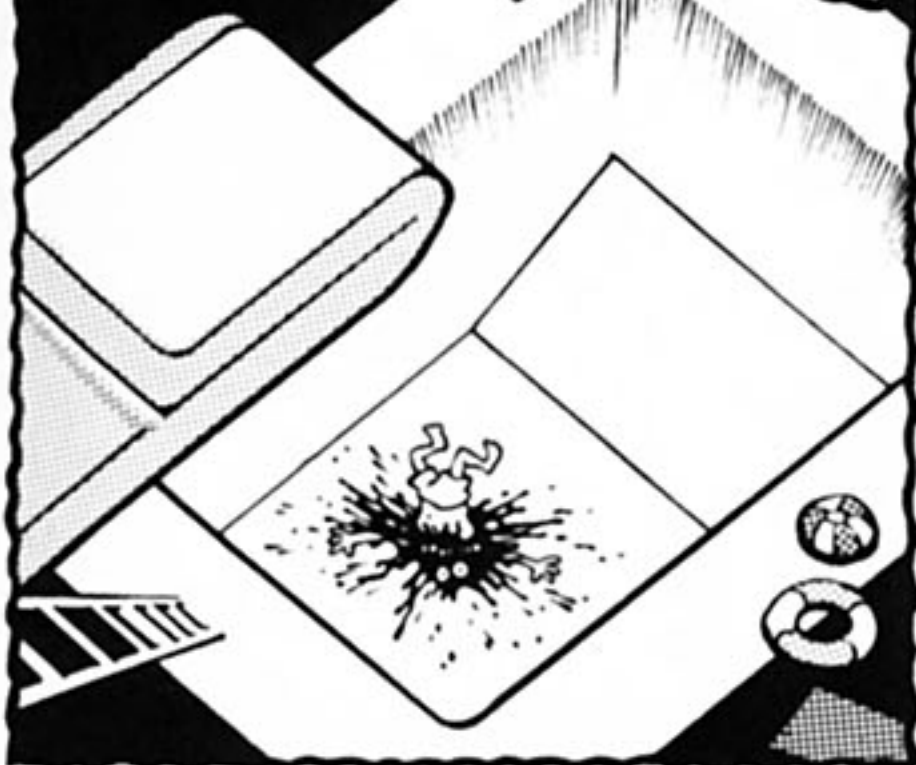
OVER THE YEARS SEVERAL PEOPLE HAVE DIED WHILE TRYING TO IMITATE THEIR FAVORITE ACTION HEROES BY USING TV OR TELEPHONE CABLES TO RAPPEL DOWN BUILDINGS.



CHRISTOPHER HOUCK WAS STRUCK AND KILLED AS HE CHASED HIS RUNAWAY COWBOY HAT IN HEAVY TRAFFIC ON TEXAS HIGHWAY 225.



WEIRD DEATH



IN BOULDER, COLORADO IN 1981, A WORKER FELL INTO A BRICKMAKING MACHINE. BY THE TIME THE ACCIDENT WAS DISCOVERED THERE WAS NOTHING LEFT OF HIM BUT BRICKS, WHICH WERE BURIED AT A LOCAL CEMETERY.



THERE IS AN AVERAGE OF 7 DEATHS PER YEAR AT AMUSEMENT PARKS IN THE UNITED STATES.



TWO UNITED STATES PRESIDENTS — THOMAS JEFFERSON AND JAMES K. POLK — HAVE DIED FROM DIARRHEA.



IN 1982 A TEN-YEAR-OLD ENGLISH GIRL DIED OF PERITONITIS CAUSED BY HER HABIT OF SWALLOWING HER OWN HAIR.



ENGLISH DO-IT-YOURSELF WILLIAM HALL COMMITTED SUICIDE IN 1971 BY DRILLING 8 HOLES INTO HIS OWN HEAD.



IN 1978 TERRY KATH, OF THE BAND "CHICAGO", TRIED TO PROVE A GUN WASN'T LOADED BY POINTING IT AT HIS HEAD AND PULLING THE TRIGGER.



A WOMAN IN BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA KILLED HER BOYFRIEND IN 1985 BY DROPPING A BOWLING BALL ON HIS HEAD WHILE HE WAS ASLEEP.



313 UNION ARMY SOLDIERS DIED OF SUNSTROKE DURING THE U.S. CIVIL WAR.





AFTER HIS DEATH IN 1930, LON CHANEY'S GHOST WAS FREQUENTLY SPOTTED SITTING ON A BUS STOP BENCH AT HOLLYWOOD & VINE. THE GHOST DISAPPEARED FOR GOOD WHEN THE BENCH WAS REPLACED IN 1942.



IN 1981, KENJI URADA BECAME THE FIRST PERSON KILLED BY A ROBOT WHEN HE WAS DISASSEMBLED BY AN AUTOMATED ASSEMBLY MACHINE.



IN 1983, A CALIFORNIA MAN WAS SUFFOCATED BY HIS WATERBED WHEN IT ROLLED OVER ON HIM AS HE SLEPT.



WHEN A BOLT OF LIGHTNING HIT A FLOCK OF WILD GESE IN ELGIN, MANITOBA IN 1932, 52 OF THE BIRDS FOUND THAT THEIR GOOSE WAS COOKED.



A CARPENTER IN DUSSELDORF, GERMANY WAS KILLED IN 1951 WHEN HE WAS SPEARED BY A 6-FOOT-LONG ICICLE.



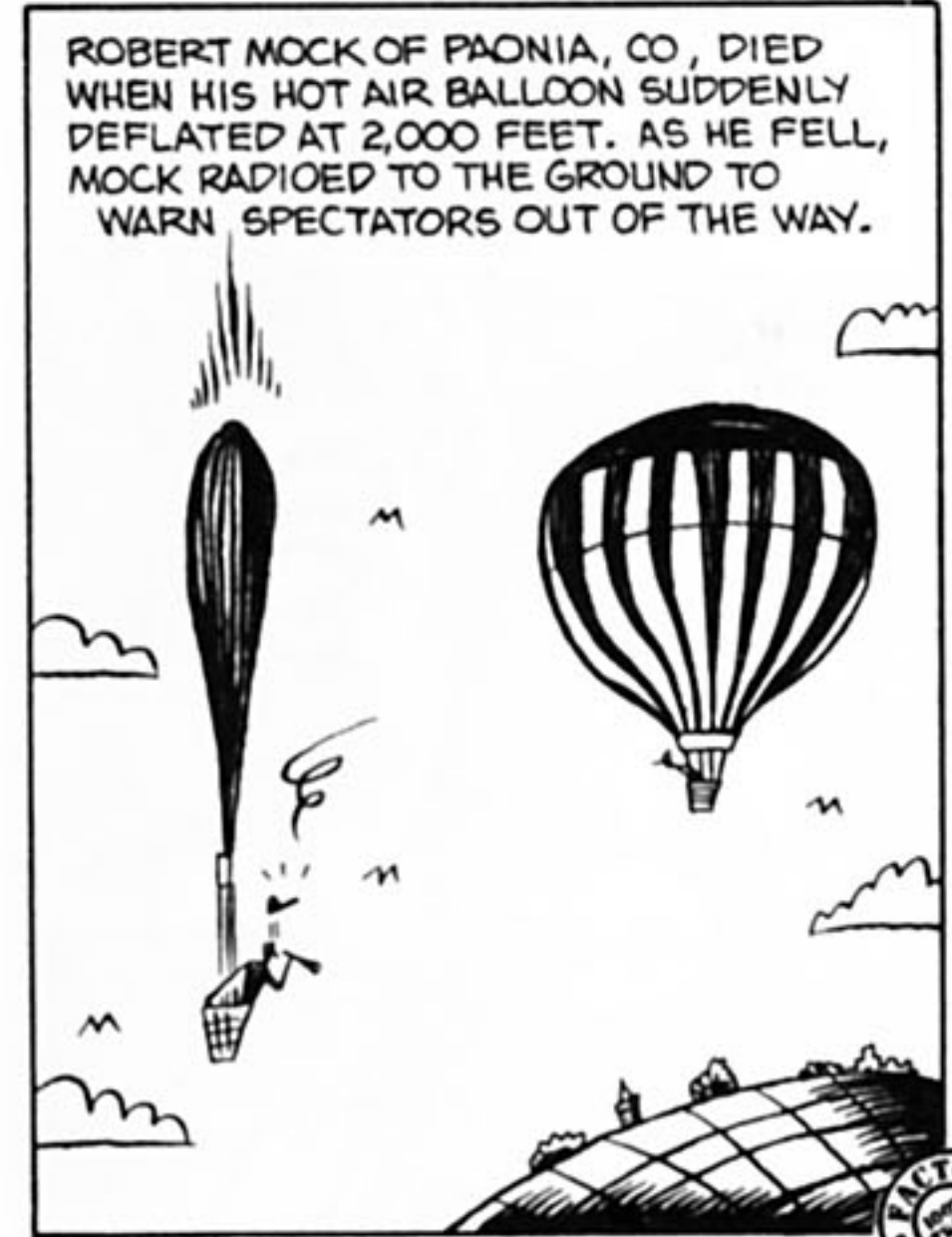
IN 1933 THE SKELETON OF A SMALL MISSING CHILD WAS FOUND IN AN EAGLE'S NEST ON A FARM IN EASTERN FINLAND.



AFTER MONTHS OF EXORCISM, A GERMAN STUDENT DIED IN 1976 OF MALNUTRITION. SINCE THEN, THE CHURCH HAS RULED THAT A DOCTOR MUST BE PRESENT WHENEVER DEMONS ARE EXPELLED.



ROBERT MOCK OF PAONIA, CO, DIED WHEN HIS HOT AIR BALLOON SUDDENLY DEFLATED AT 2,000 FEET. AS HE FELL, MOCK RADIOED TO THE GROUND TO WARN SPECTATORS OUT OF THE WAY.





A MEMBER OF A SOUTH CAROLINA WEDDING PARTY WAS KILLED IN 1992 WHEN HE WAS **STRUCK** BY THE BRIDAL COUPLE'S GETAWAY AIRCRAFT AS HE **MOONED** THEM ON THE RUNWAY.



WHEN MAJOR N. BOGART, A POPULAR SHRINER AND FORMER CLOWN, DIED IN GRAND RAPIDS, MISSOURI 8 FELLOW CLOWNS SERVED AS HIS **PALLBEARERS**.



IN 1992 AN L.A. COUNTY PARKING CONTROL OFFICER WROTE A **TICKET** FOR AN ILLEGALLY PARKED **CAR**. THE **COP** FAILED TO NOTICE THAT THE **DRIVER** OF THE CAR WAS **STIFF**, **DISCOLORED** AND HAD BEEN **DEAD** FOR SOME TIME.



AT LEAST HE DIDN'T PULL THE DRIVER OUT OF THE CAR AND **BEAT** HIM.

AFTER SHE DIED IN 1988, **RABID** BALTIMORE ORIOLES FAN **ELAINE SOLLINS** HAD HER ASHES **SCATTERED** AT THIRD BASE IN MEMORIAL STADIUM SO SHE WOULD ALWAYS BE WITH THE TEAM.



THE ORIOLES MOVED TO CAMDEN YARDS 3 YEARS LATER.

IN 1987, A 50-YEAR-OLD WOMAN DIED OF **COPPER** POISONING AFTER SHE **SWALLOWED** **\$1.74** IN **PENNIES**.



THE **COINS** REMOVED FROM HER **STOMACH** DURING **AUTOPSY** WERE FOUND TO BE IN **GOOD** TO **VERY GOOD** CONDITION.

IN METHUEN, MA, A CHILD WAS **ATTACKED** BY A **SWAN** AND **DROWNED** IN 1938 -- THE **ONLY** CASE OF A **KILLER SWAN** ON RECORD.

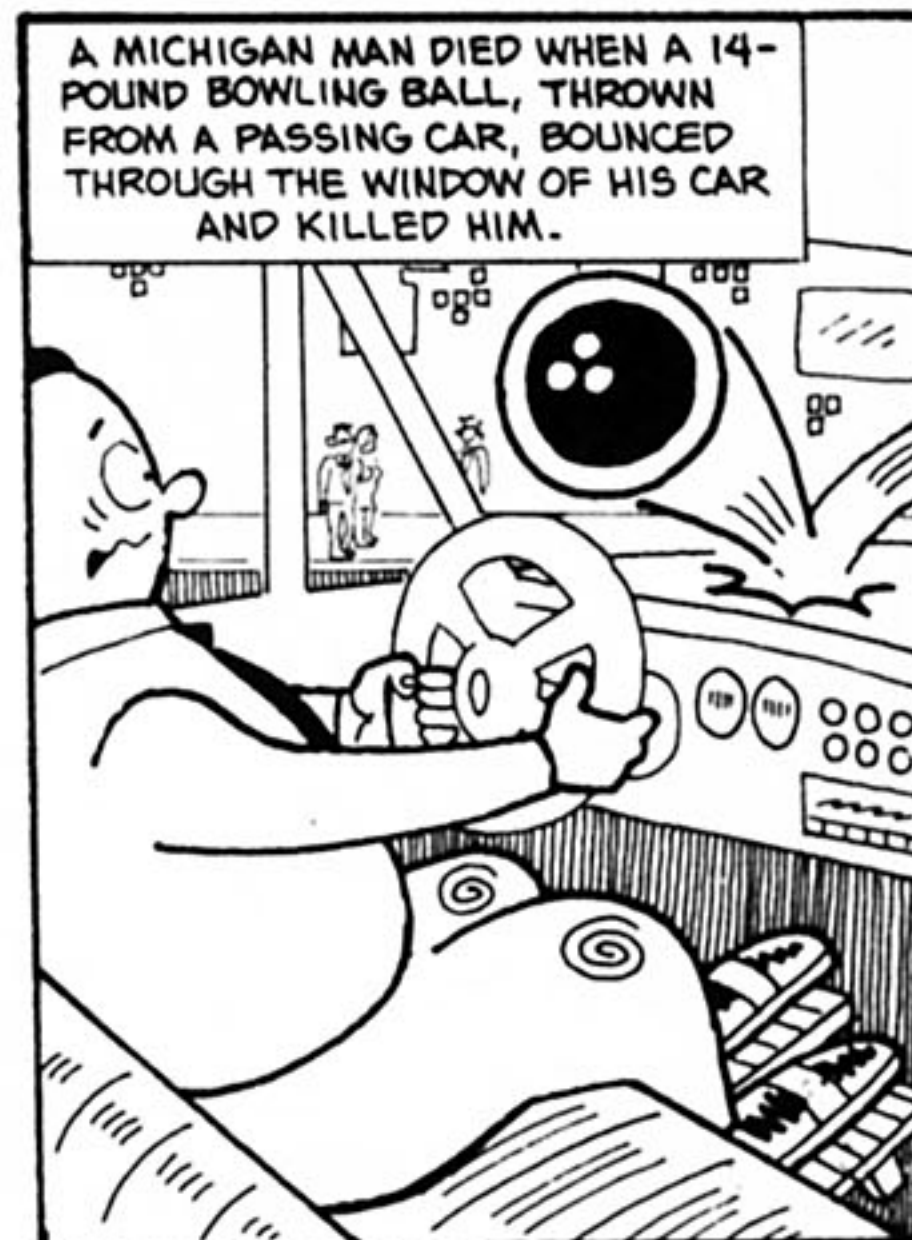


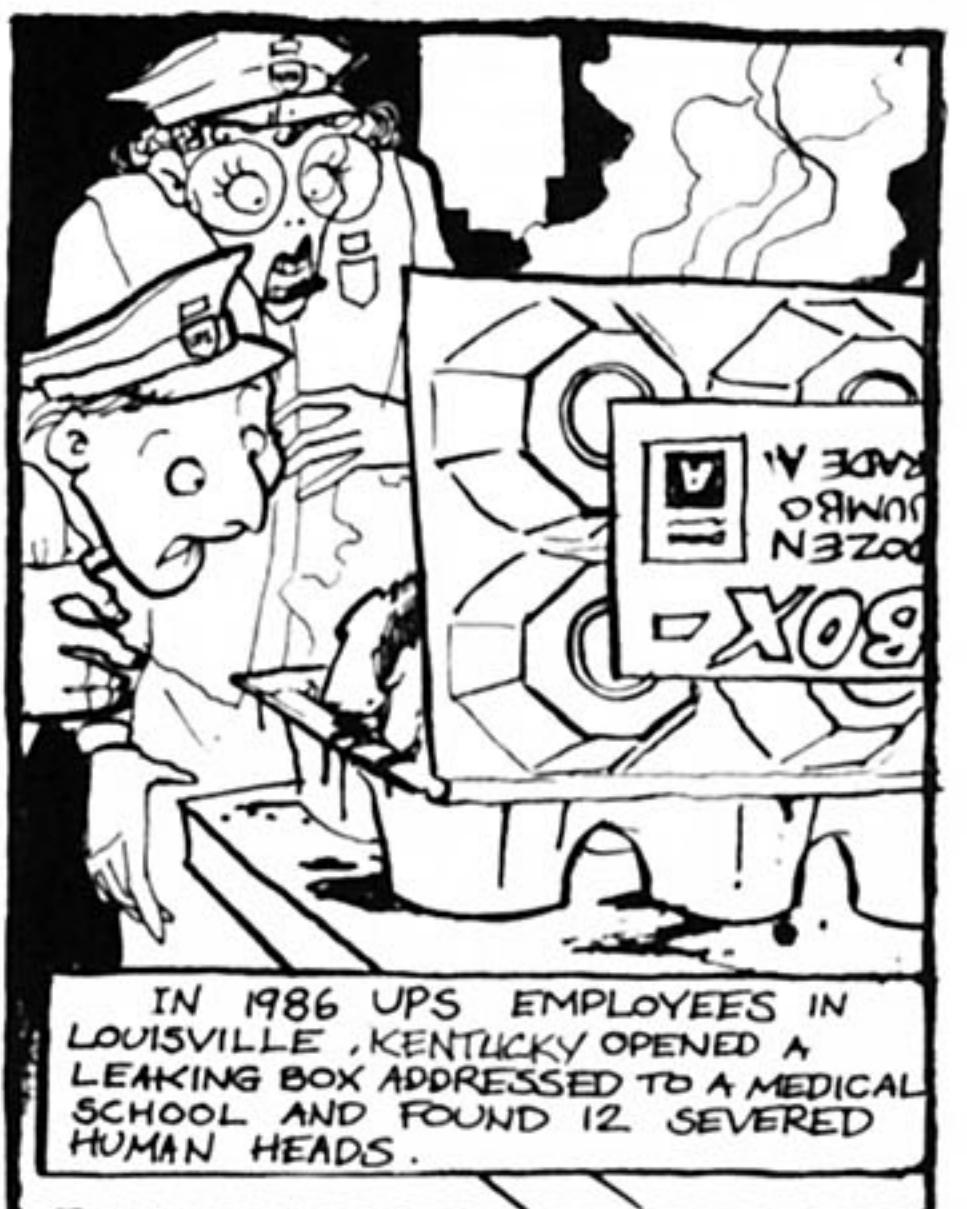
A **BOLT** OF **LIGHTNING** STRUCK A **BASEBALL FIELD** IN FLORIDA ON JULY 31, 1949, **BURNING** A TRENCH FROM FIRST TO SECOND BASE AND **KILLING 3 PLAYERS**.

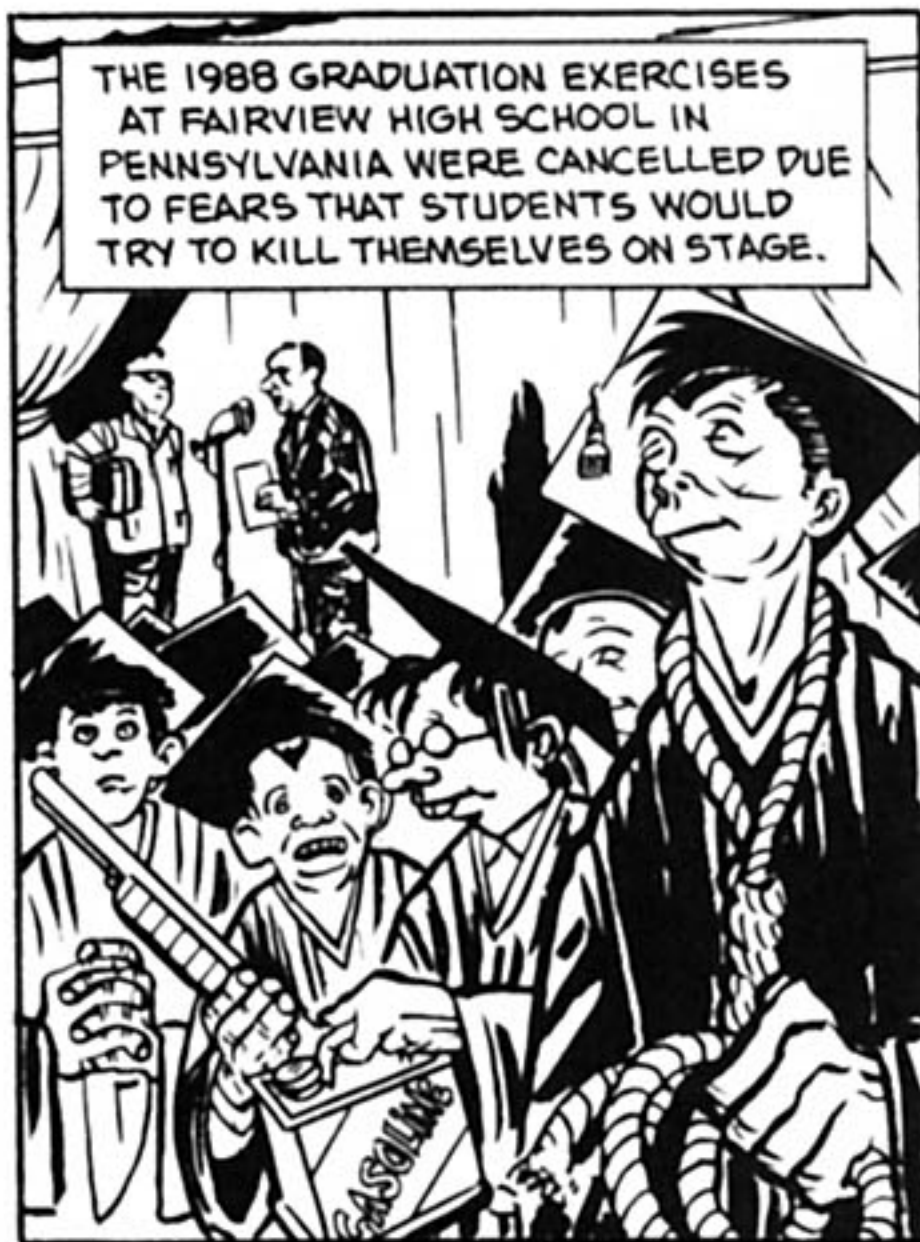


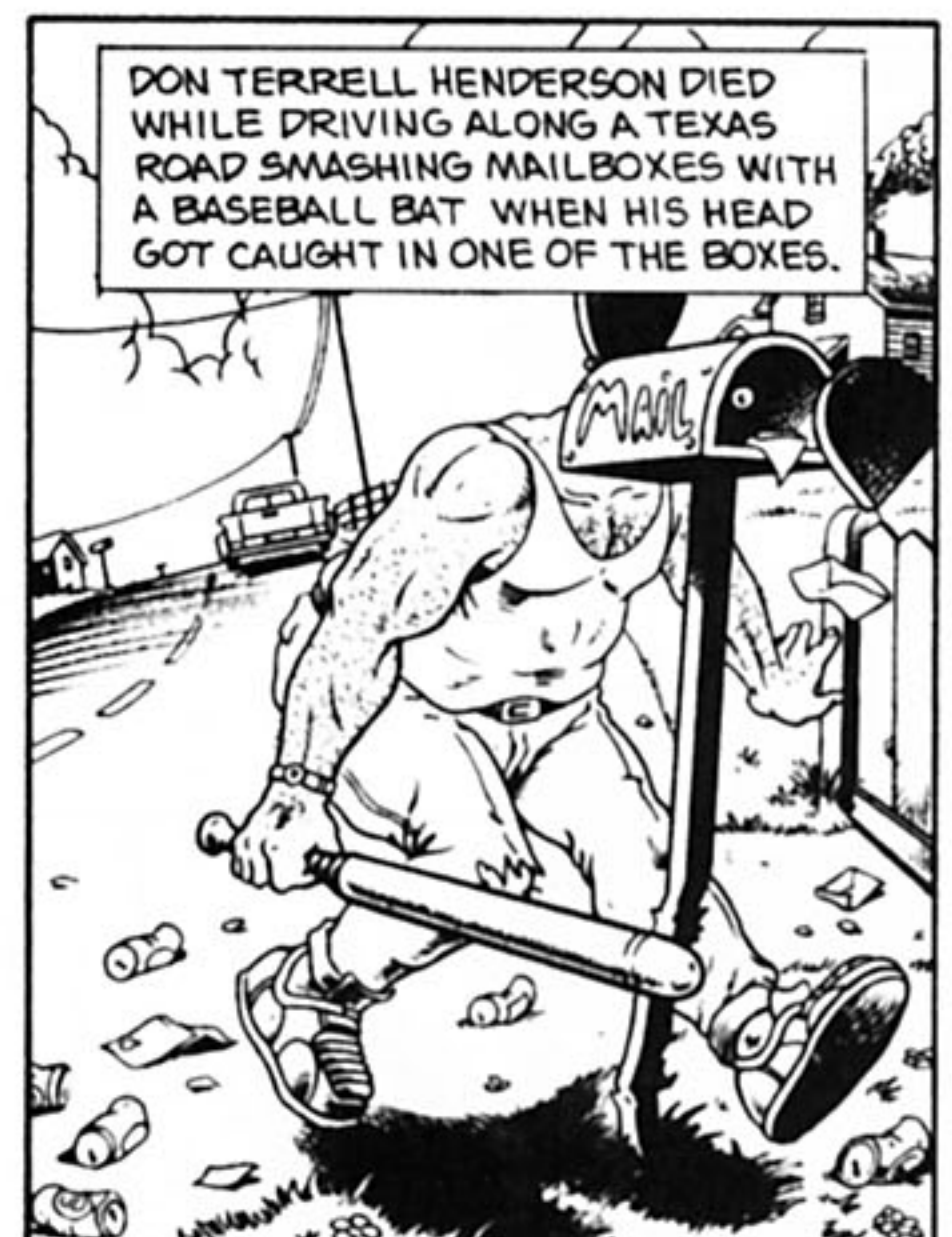
DURING WORLD WAR II, **MYRTLE**, A PET **CHICKEN**, WAS **PARACHUTED** INTO THE **BATTLE ZONE**. SHE DIED AT THE **BATTLE OF ARNHEM** IN 1944.











WEIRD DEATH



IN CALIFORNIA A YOUNG WOMAN COMMITTED SUICIDE IN 1984 BY CLOSING HERSELF UP IN HER FAMILY'S DISHWASHER.



A WOMAN SHOPPING FOR A HOUSE IN SPOKANE, WASHINGTON FOUND A FREEZER FULL OF MORE THAN 100 DEAD CATS. THE OWNER OF THE HOUSE SAID HE WAS SAVING THE BODIES SO HE COULD BE BURIED WITH THEM.



IN 1990, THE CORONER OF WAYNE COUNTY, NEW YORK EXAMINED A DEAD RABBIT...



DAIRY DELIVERY DRIVER JOSEPH LAROSE WAS KILLED WHEN 500 POUNDS OF ICE CREAM TREATS FELL ON HIM IN TAMPA, FL.



ELEVEN PEOPLE DROWNED IN MOLASSES WHEN A TANK BURST AND SENT 2.3 MILLION GALLONS OF STICKY BROWN GOO ROARING THROUGH THE STREETS OF BOSTON IN 1919.



BENJAMIN P. BERNSTEIN WAS DRIVING INTO MANHATTAN TO PICK UP HIS WIFE AT WORK WHEN HE WAS KILLED BY A FALLING 500-POUND SLAB OF THE FDR DRIVE IN 1989.



14-YEAR-OLD MARTINE BLOT OF PARIS WAS KILLED BY A MAN WHO FELL ON HER AS HE JUMPED FROM THE TOWER OF NOTRE DAME CATHEDRAL TO COMMIT SUICIDE.



RICHARD LEWIS OF BROOKLYN, NY, LIVED TO BE 105 YEARS OLD. HE ATTRIBUTED HIS LONG LIFE TO A DIET OF BACON GREASE, FRIED EGGS, AND 15 POUNDS OF SUGAR A MONTH.



HE ALSO SMOKED PHILLY CIGARS AND DRANK AS MUCH THUNDERBIRD WINE AS HE COULD GET.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINAL DISPOSITIONS

PHYSICAL DISPOSAL

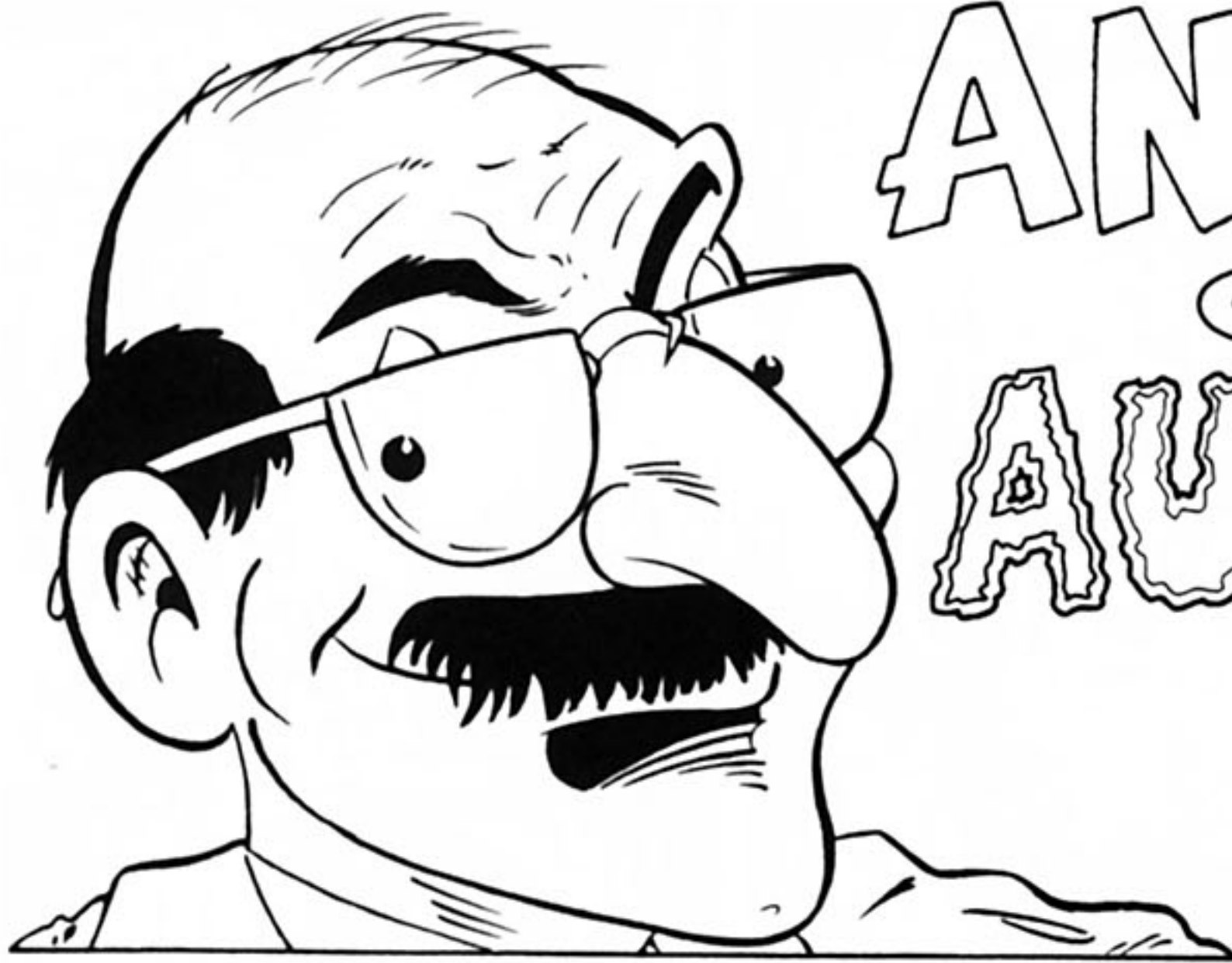
When you think of the millions of people who die every day, you realize how much work goes into the disposal of dead human bodies. Holes have to be dug (*page 116*), ovens have to be fired up (*page 121*), forms have to be filled out. Medical specialists are employed to perform autopsies (*page 108*), funeral directors are employed to embalm corpses (*page 112*), teachers are hired to train the doctors and embalmers. There are coffin factories employing hundreds of skilled craftspeople, and a coffin sales force; there are truck drivers delivering coffins, and printers producing coffin brochures. All of which goes to show you that death is not only fascinating, but it's great for the economy too!



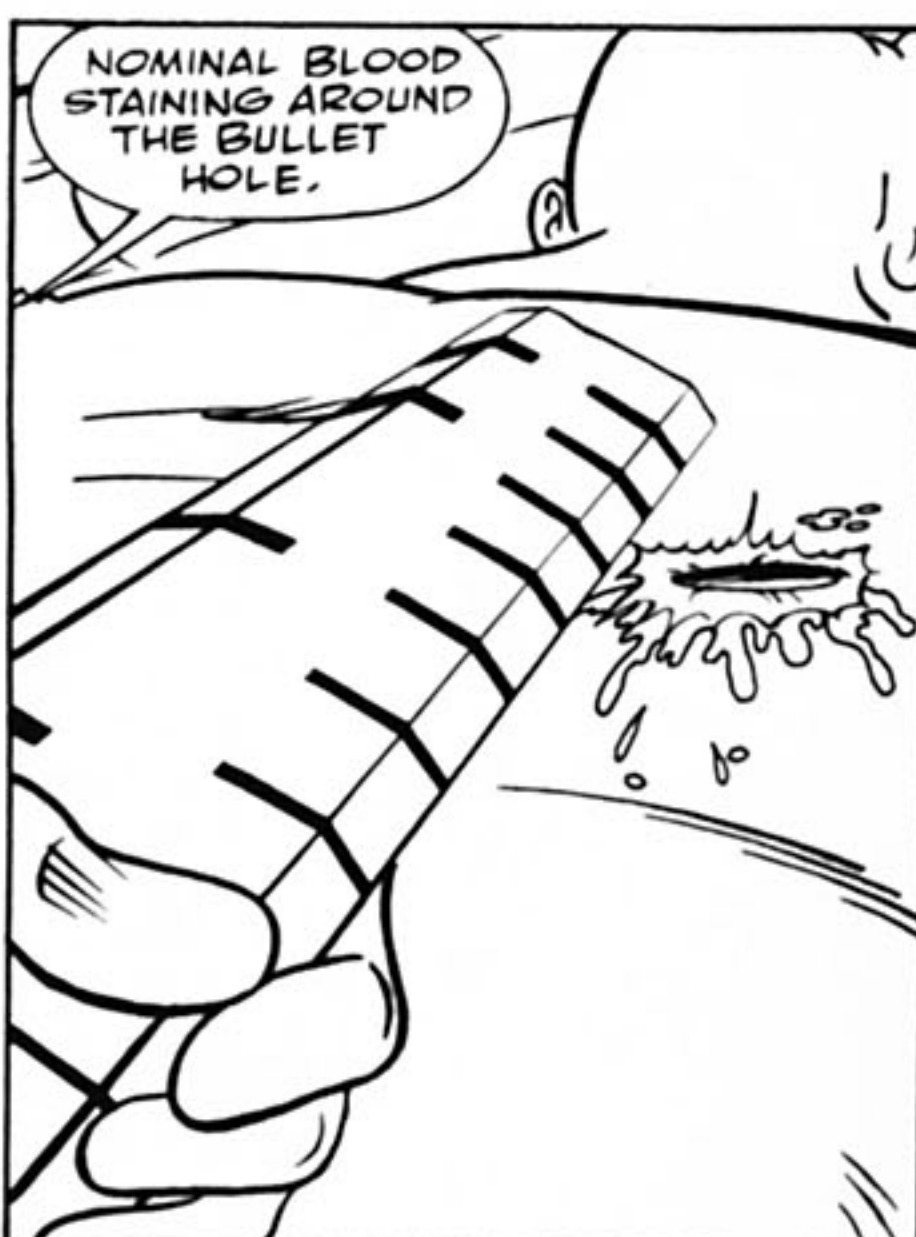
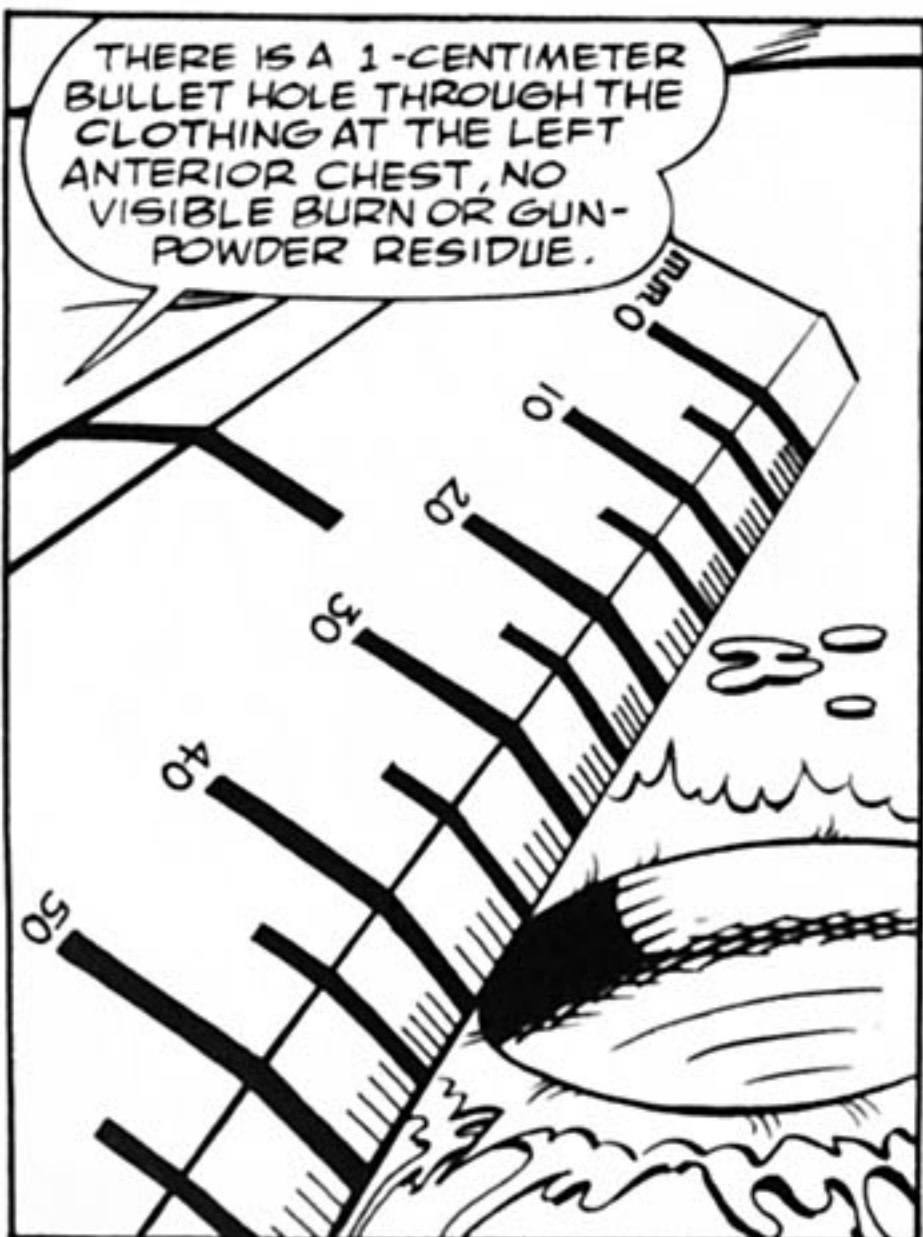
TELL ME, DOCTOR -- WHAT IS
**THE DEFINITION OF
DEATH?**

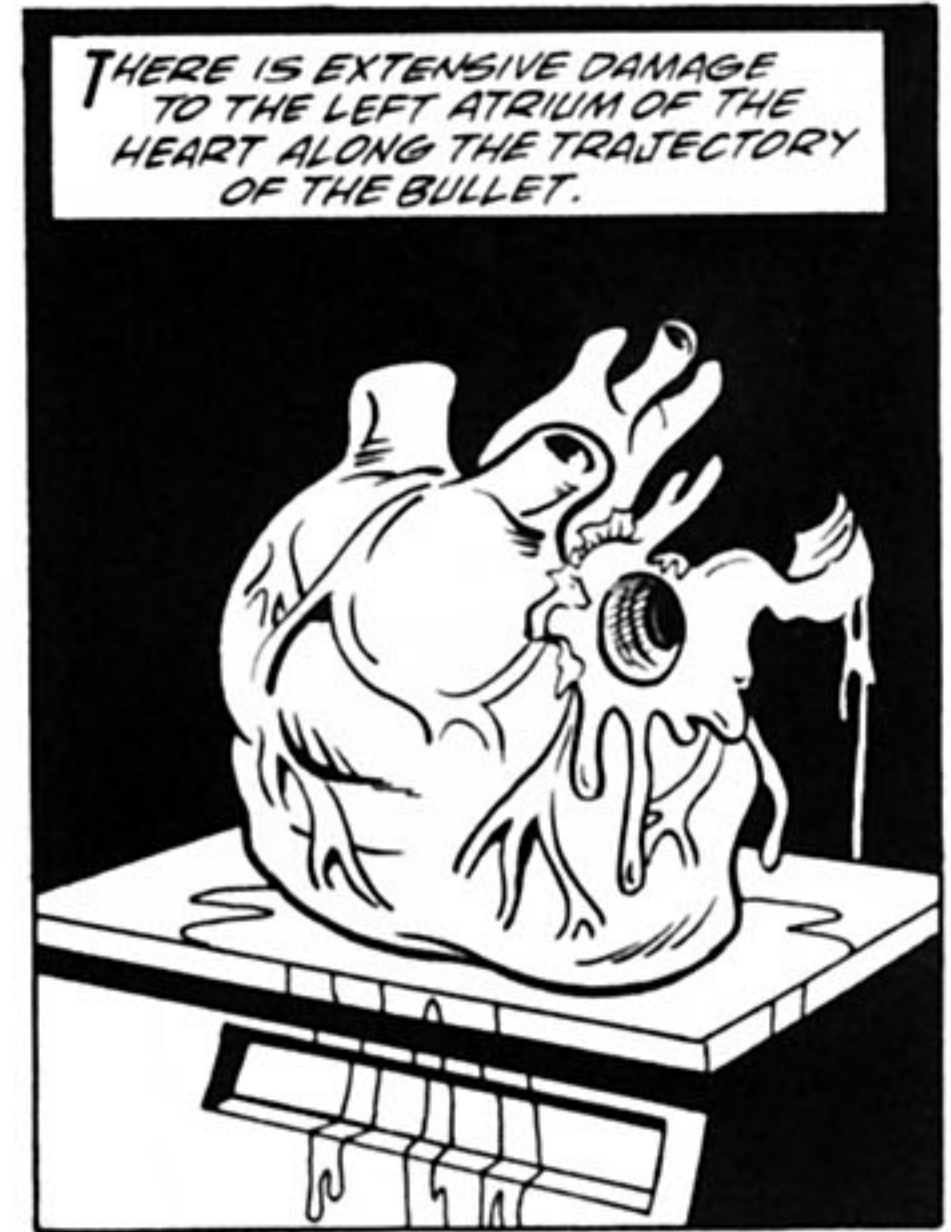
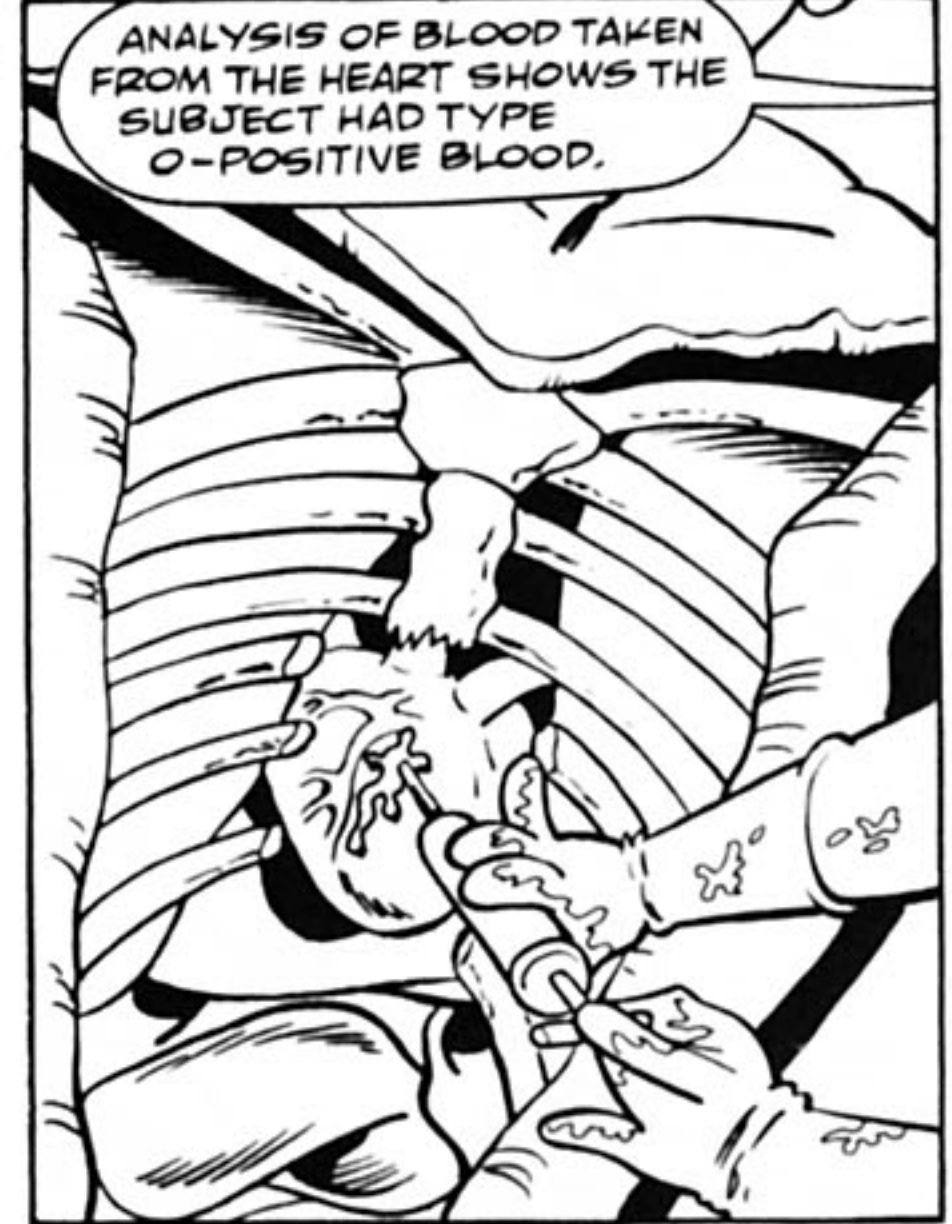


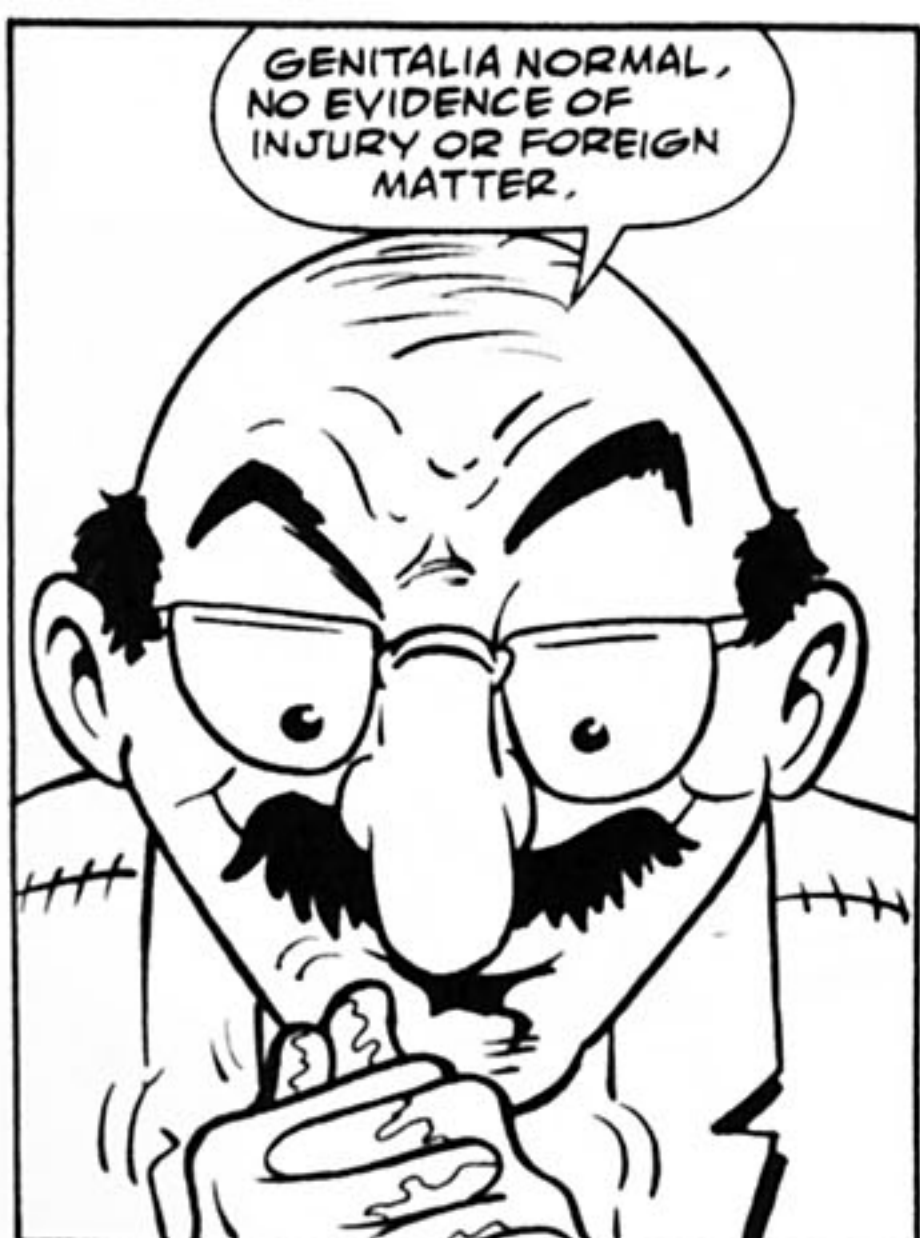
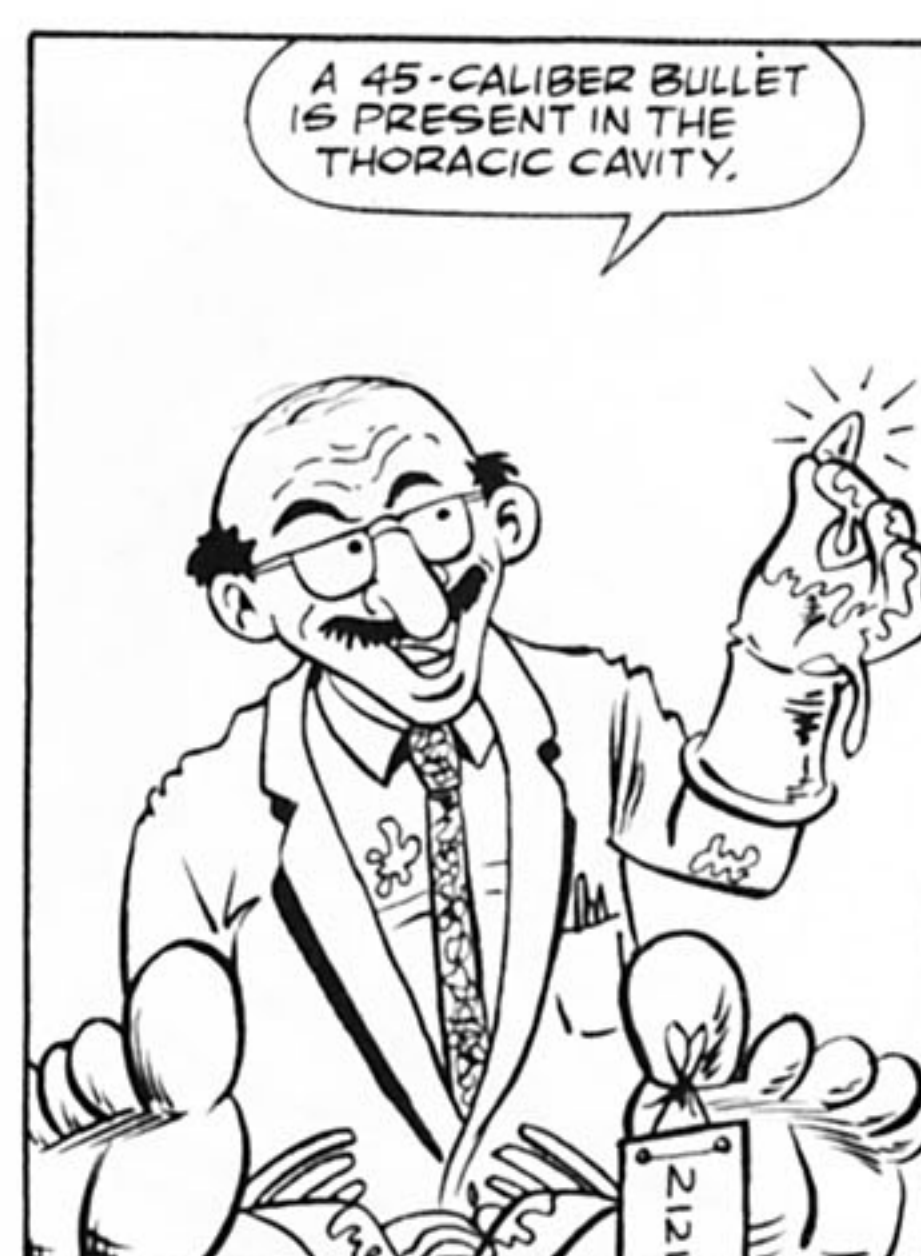


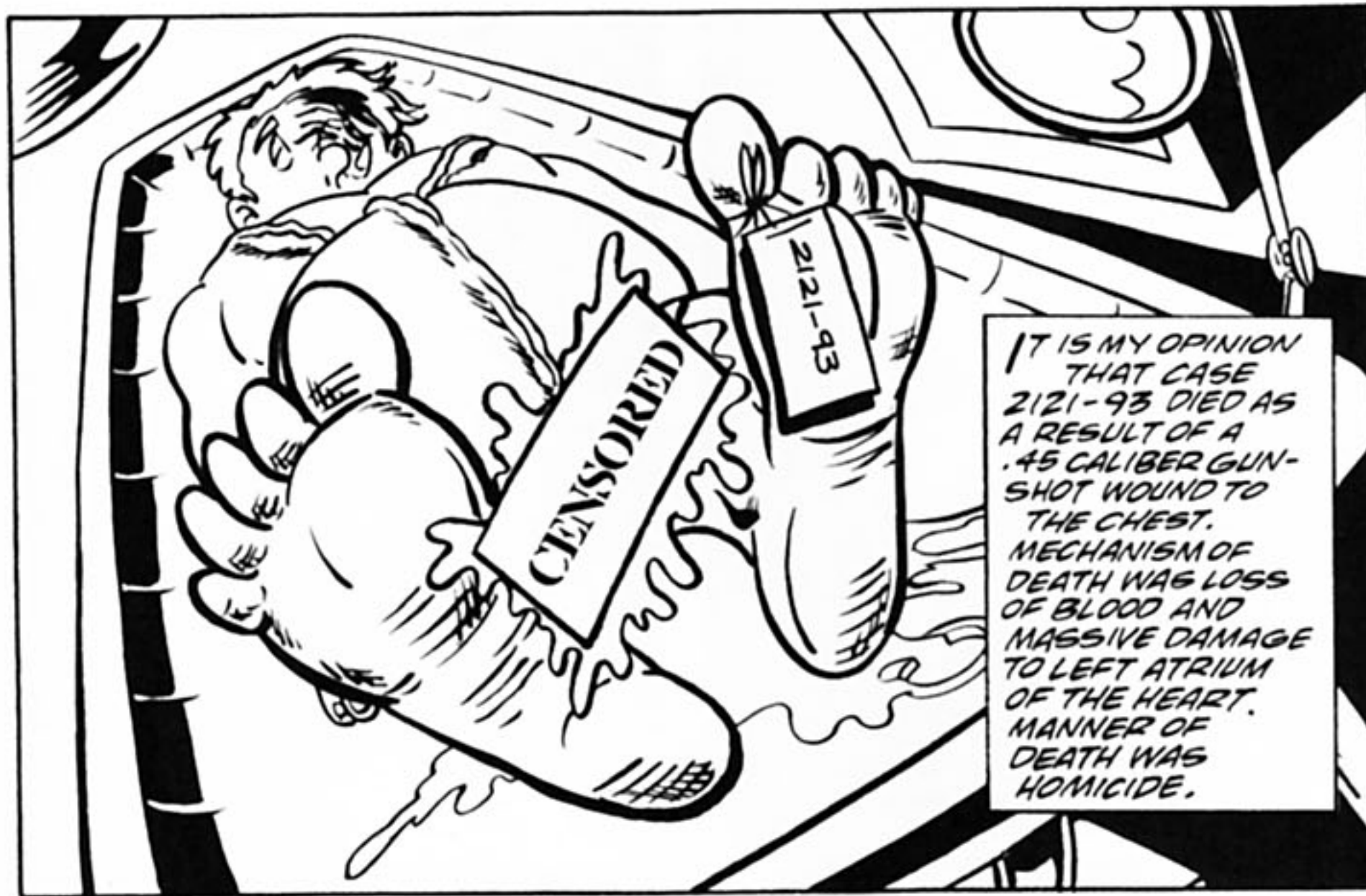
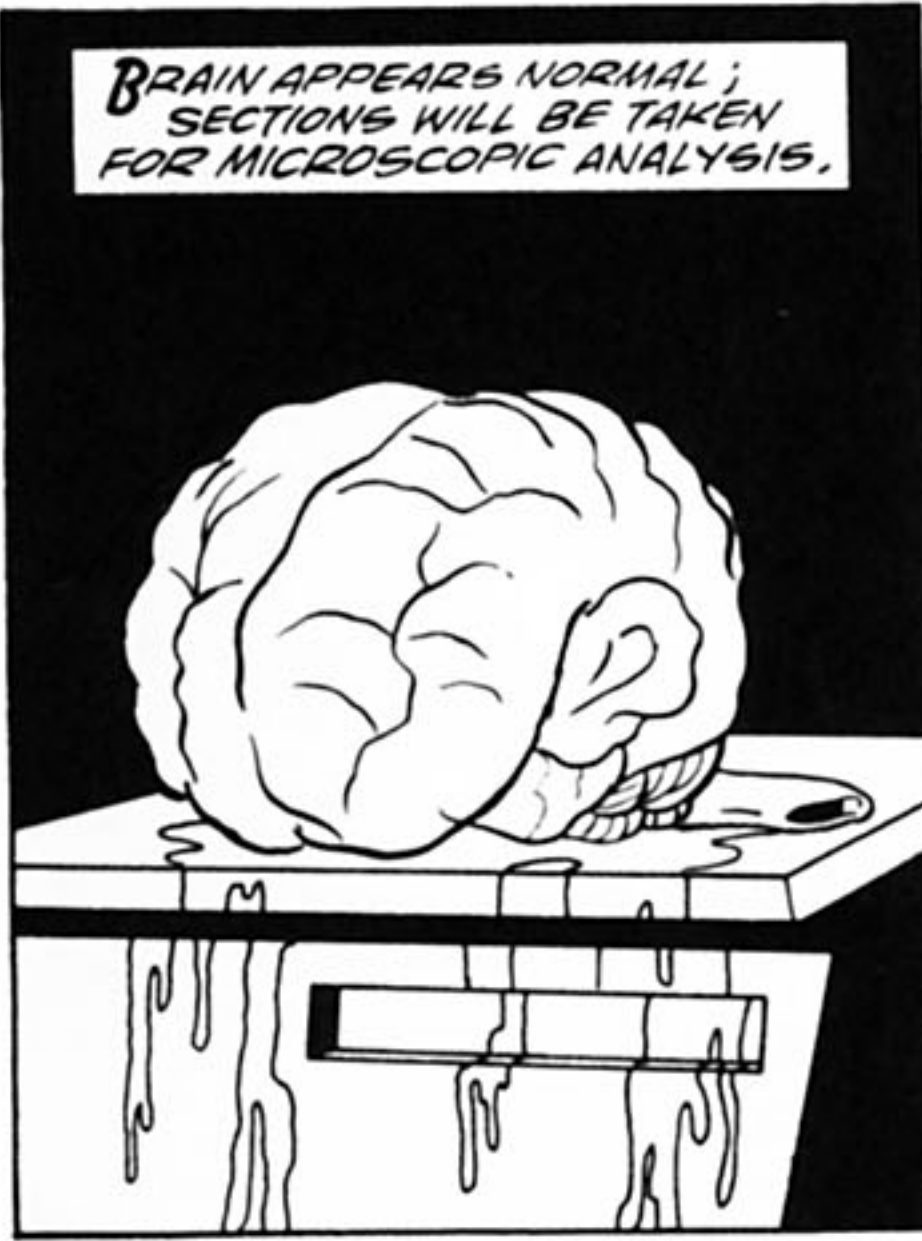


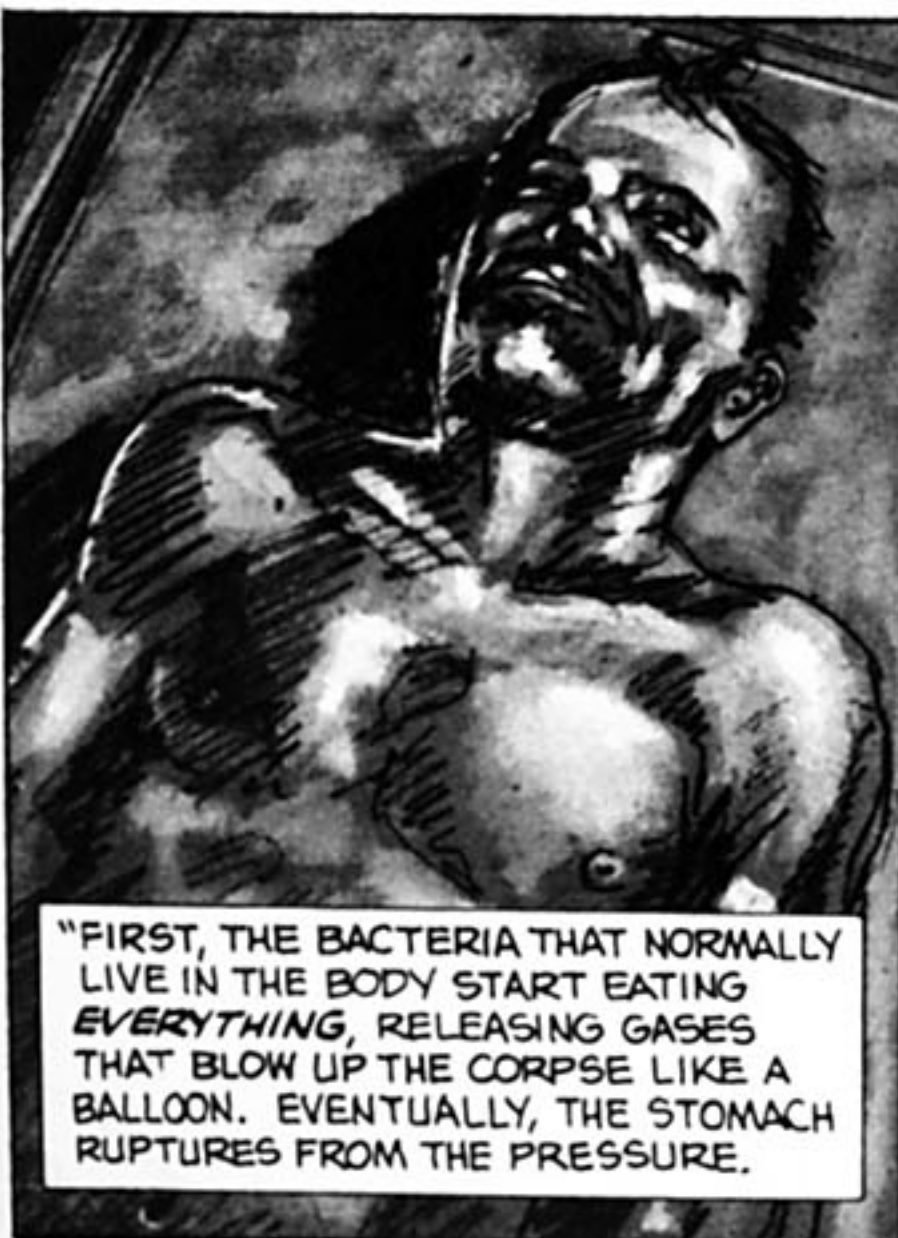
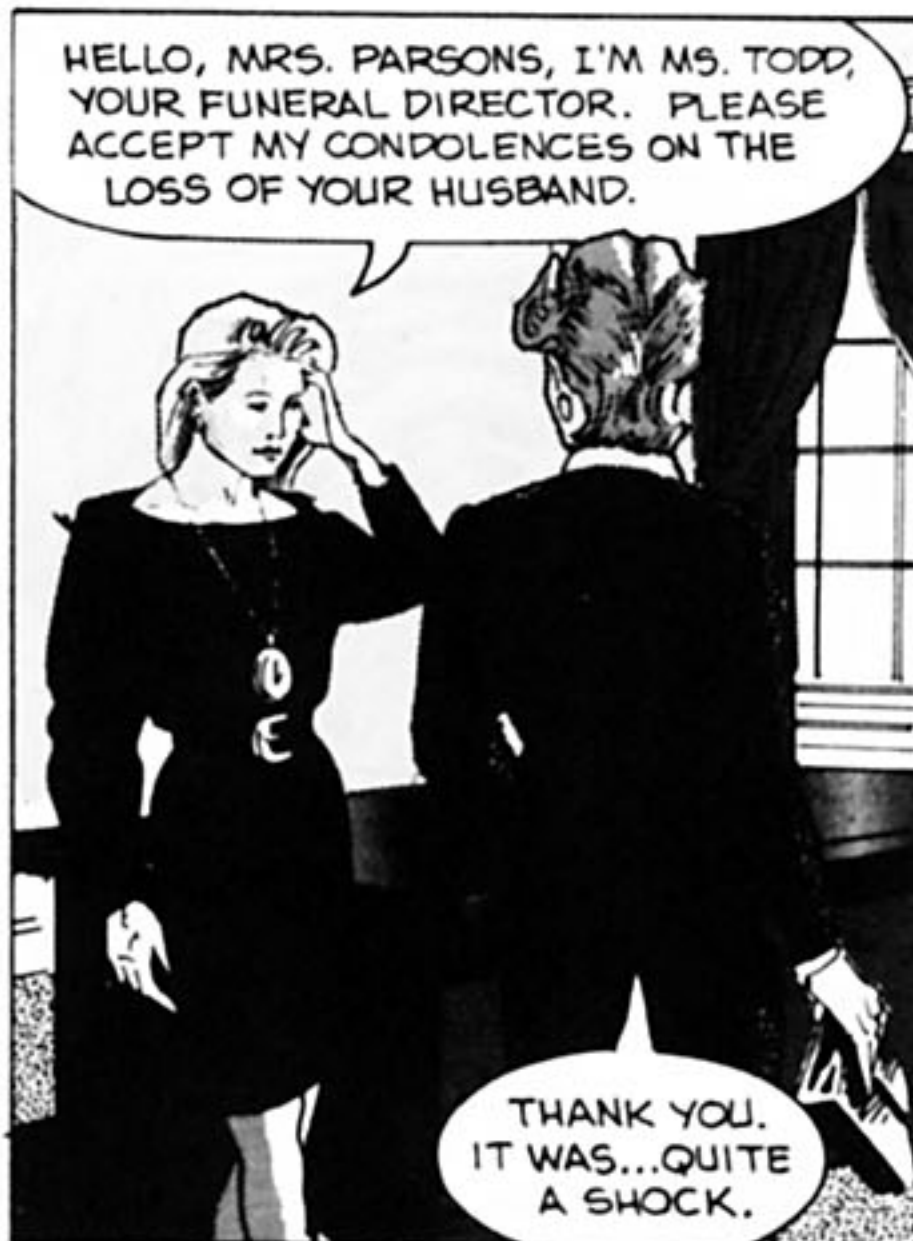
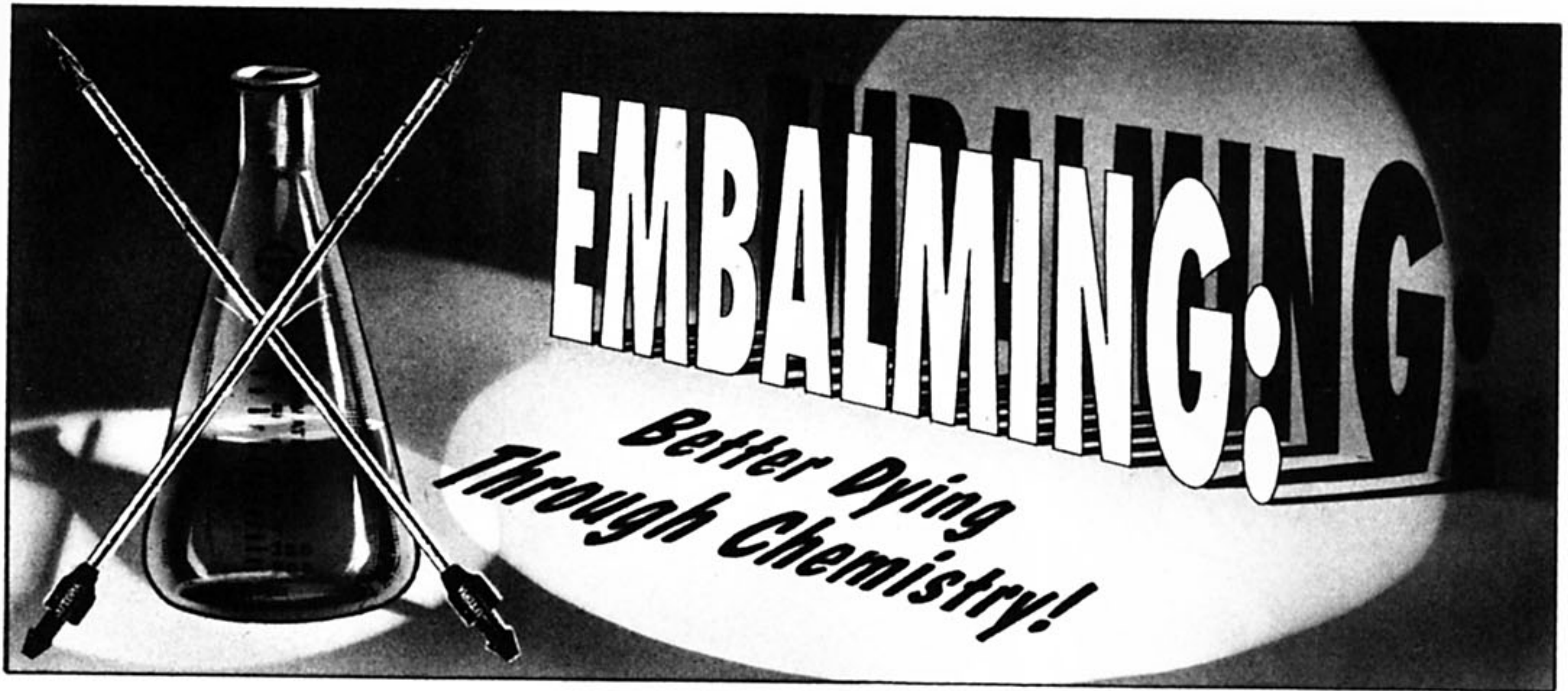
ANATOMY OF AN AUTOPSY

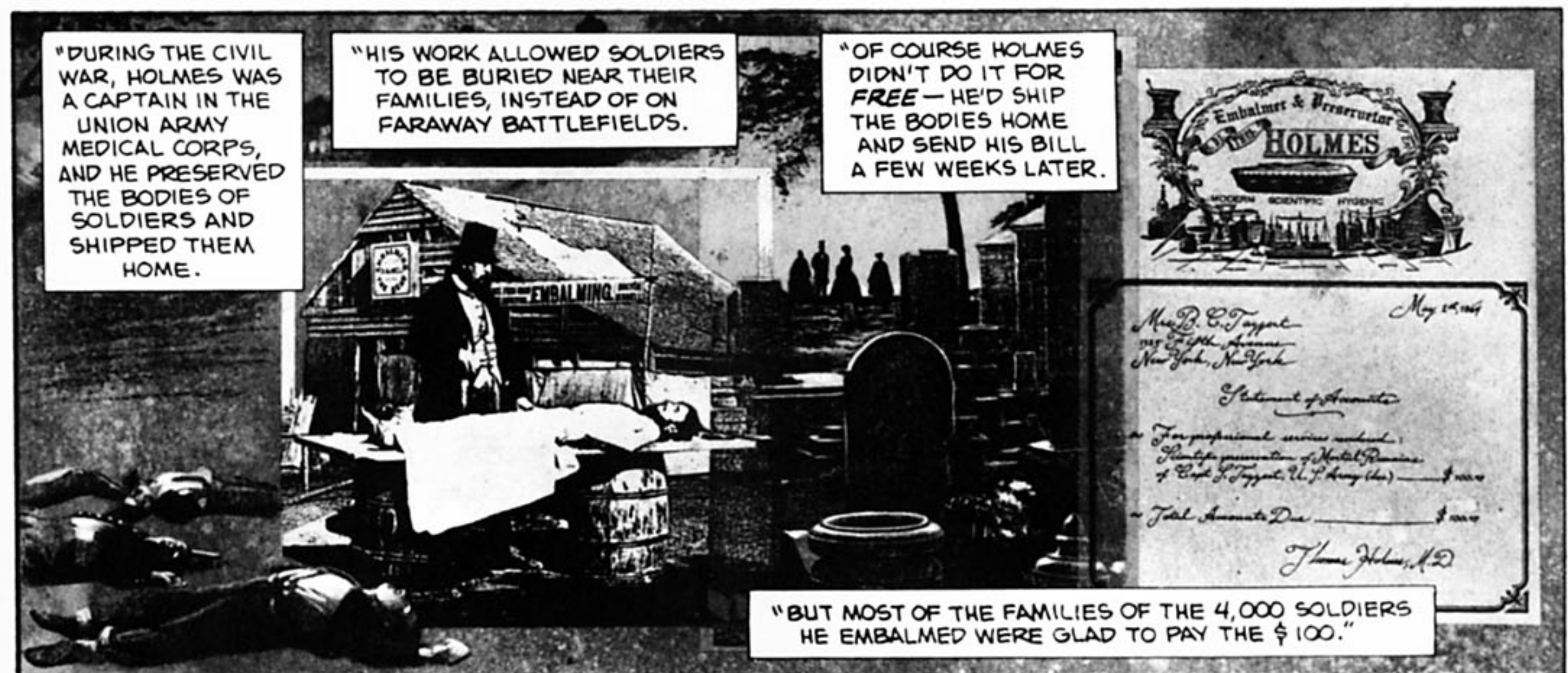
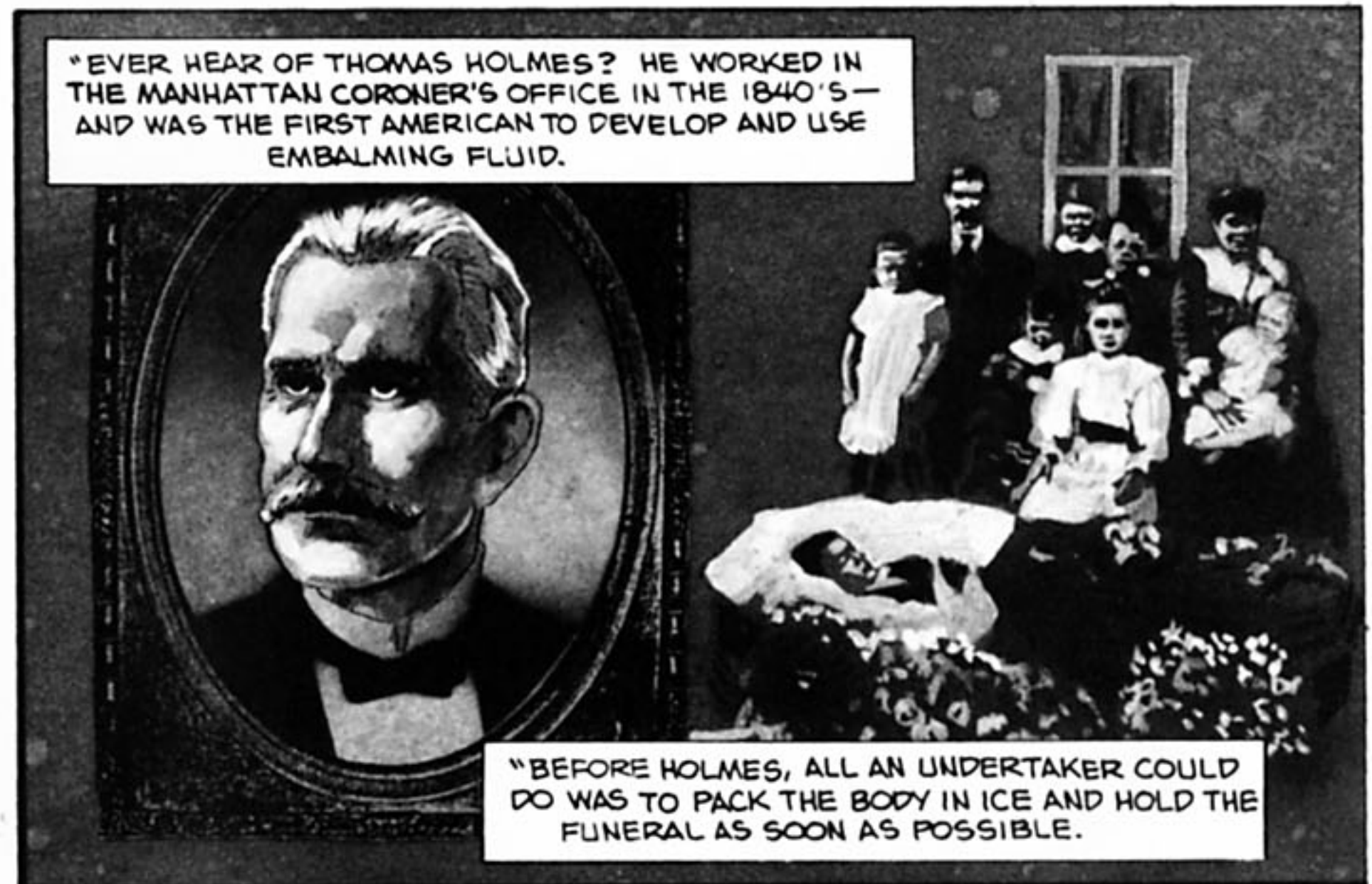


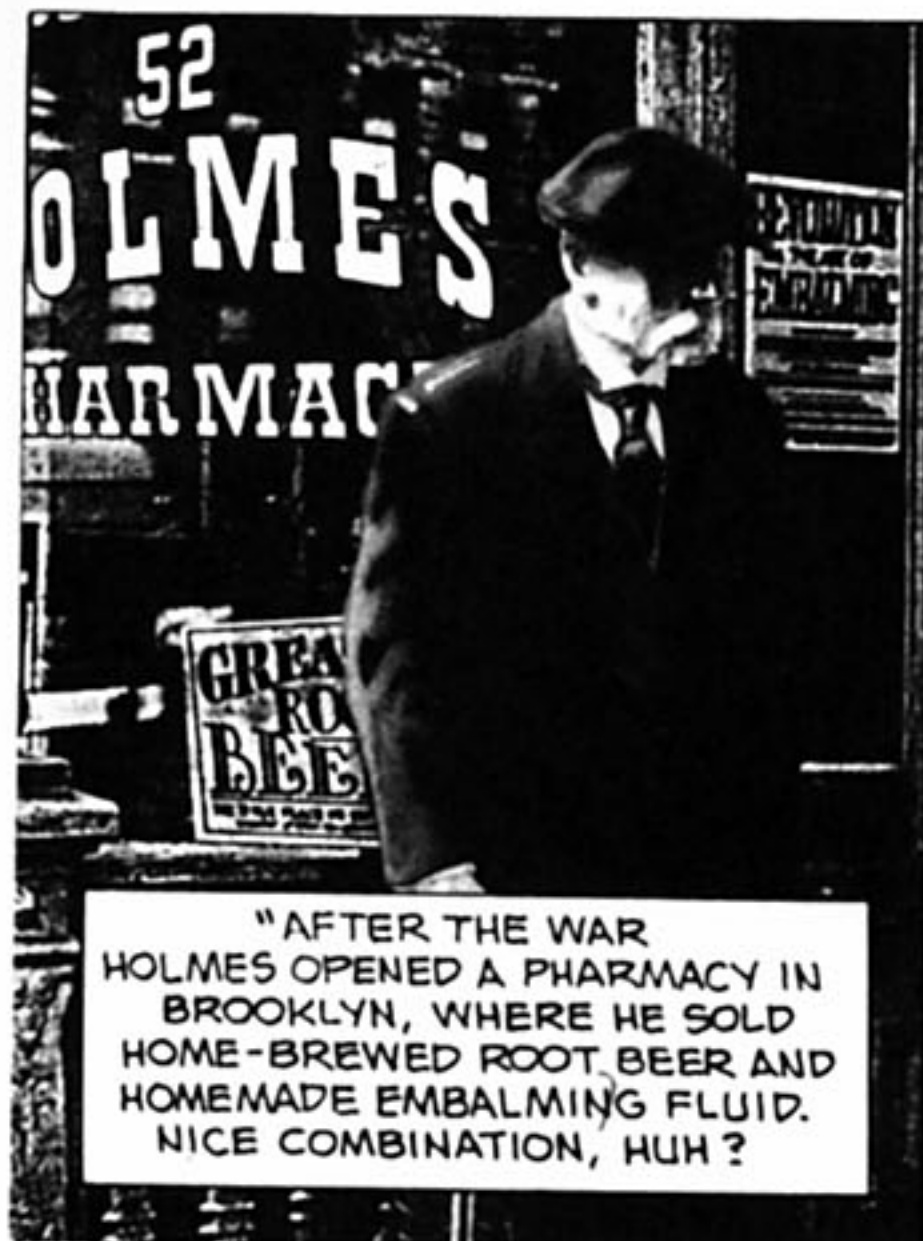


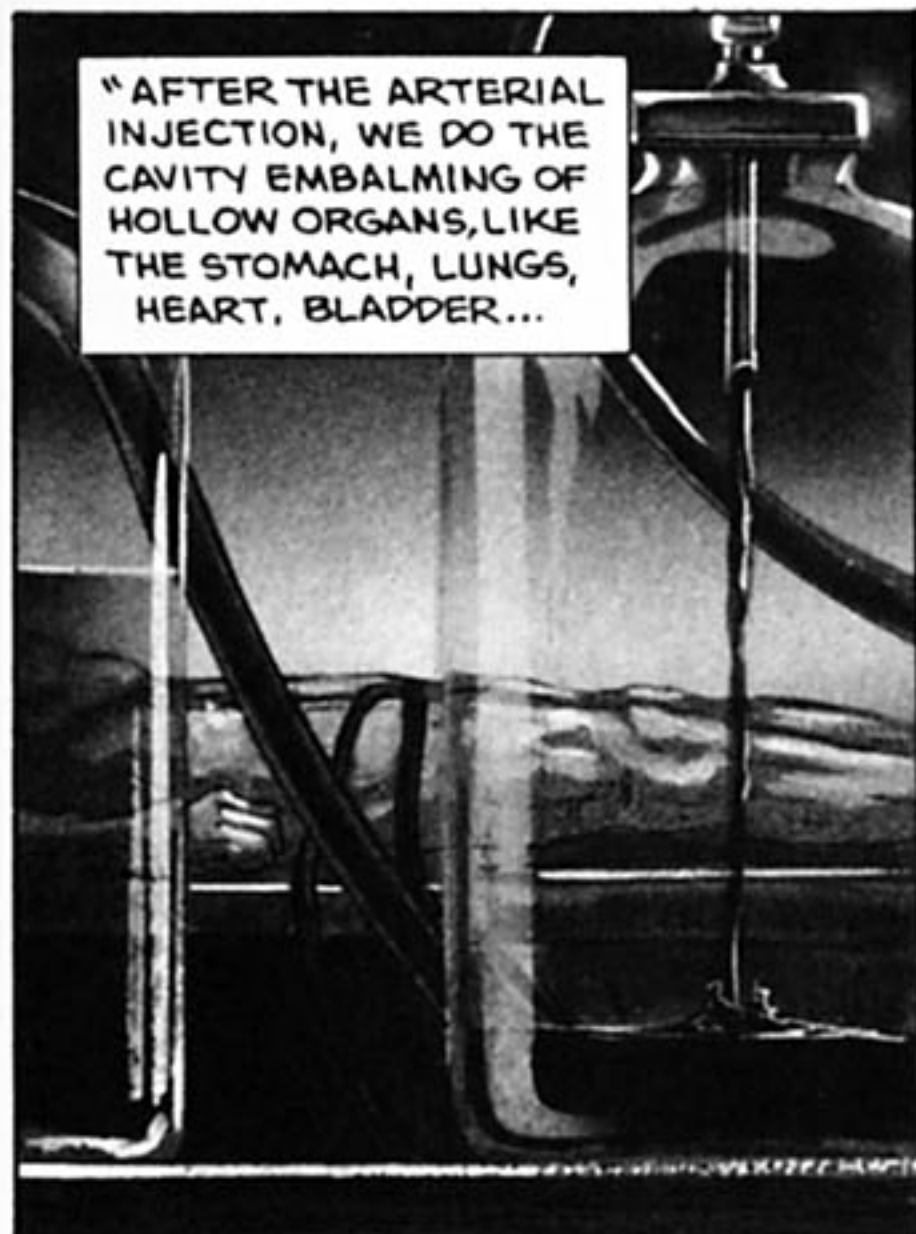












"AFTER THE ARTERIAL INJECTION, WE DO THE CAVITY EMBALMING OF HOLLOW ORGANS, LIKE THE STOMACH, LUNGS, HEART, BLADDER...



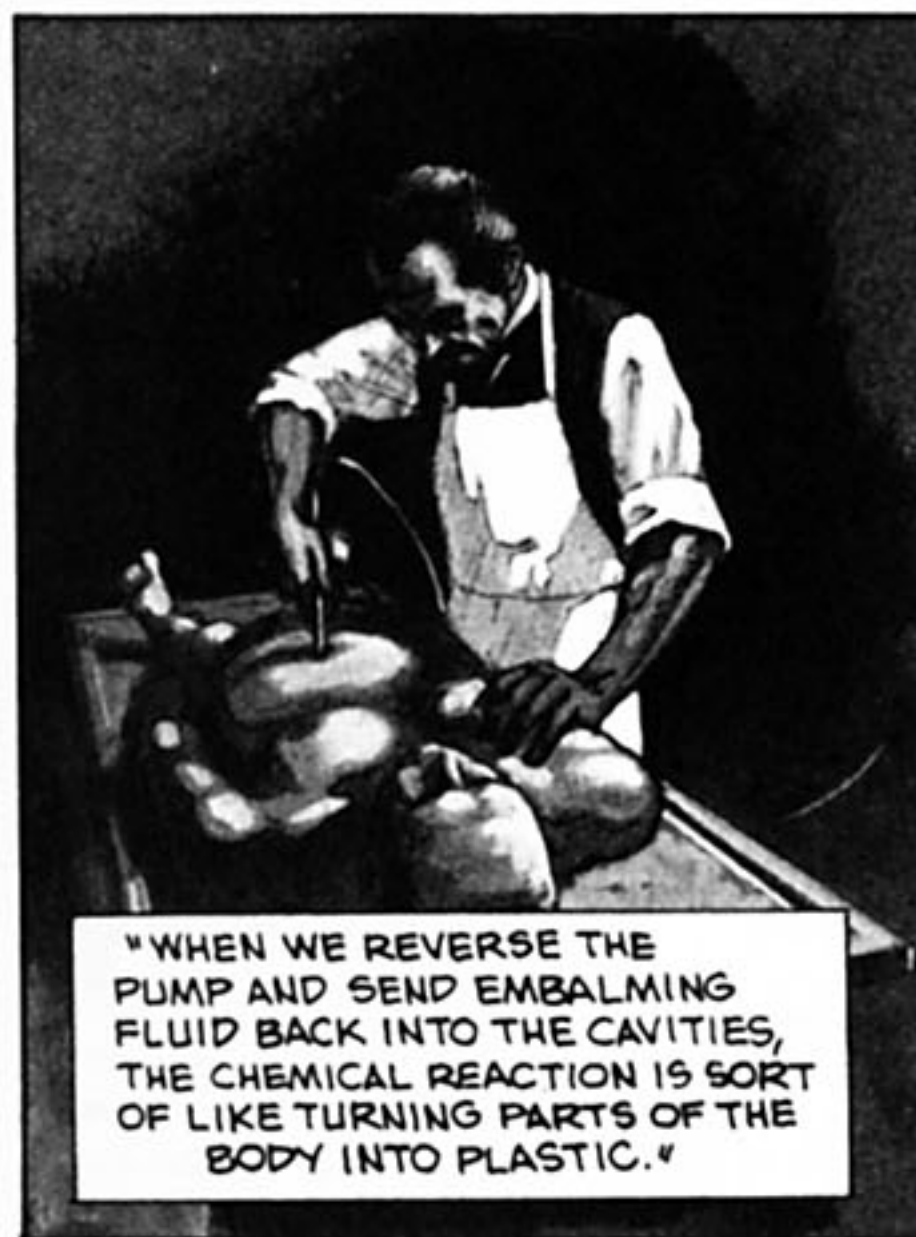
"...uh... DO YOU KNOW WHAT A TROCAR IS?"



"WE, UH, INSERT THE TROCAR THROUGH THE ABDOMINAL WALL TO VACUUM UP THE CONTENTS OF THE VARIOUS ORGANS."



"THE FOOD IN THE STOMACH, THE BLOOD IN THE HEART, THE MESS IN THE INTESTINES, THE SPERM IN THE TESTICLES—IT ALL GOES DOWN THE DRAIN."



"WHEN WE REVERSE THE PUMP AND SEND EMBALMING FLUID BACK INTO THE CAVITIES, THE CHEMICAL REACTION IS SORT OF LIKE TURNING PARTS OF THE BODY INTO PLASTIC."



STOP! STOP, PLEASE! PLASTIC! MY GOD!



BUT I DIDN'T GET TO THE PART ABOUT THE COSMETICS YET.

I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE COSMETICS! I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU GO THROUGH ALL THIS JUST TO PRESERVE A BODY FOR A HUNDRED YEARS!



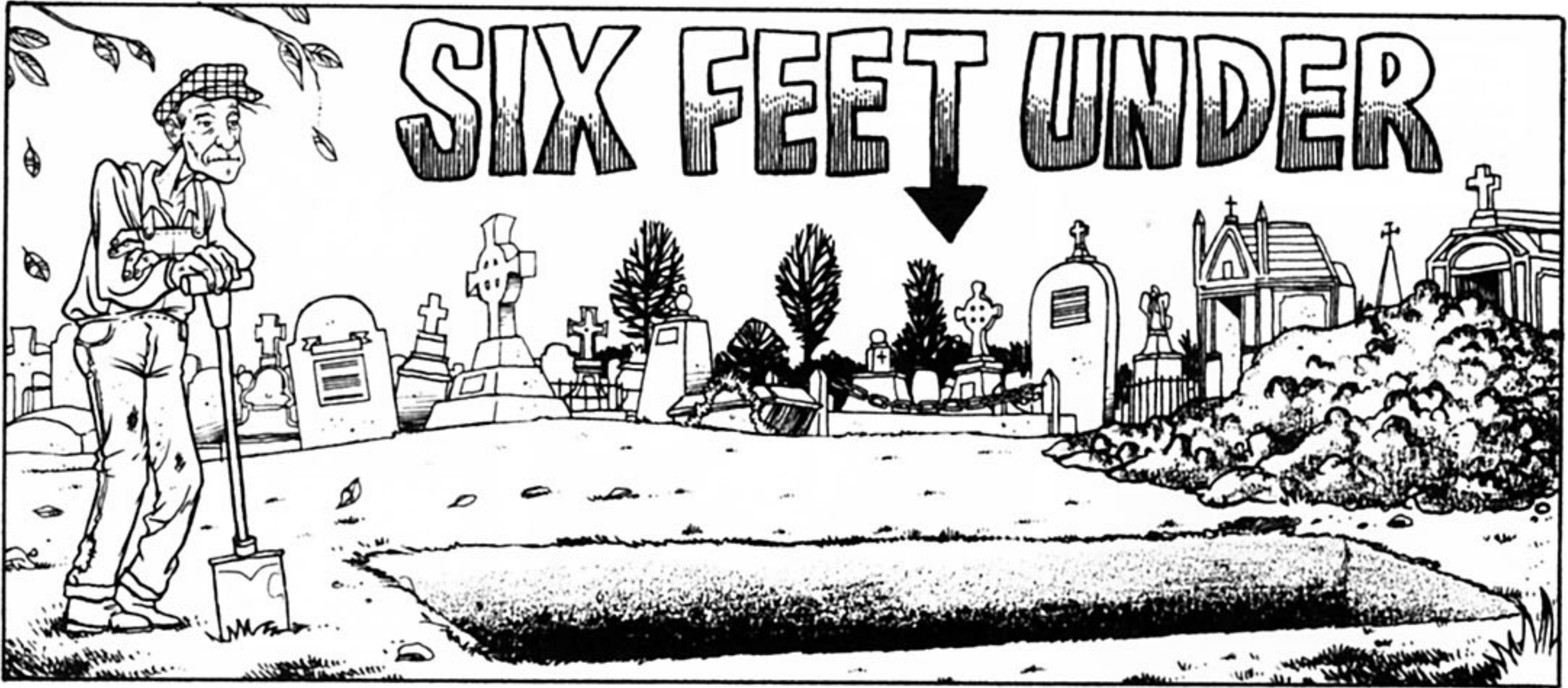
BUT IT'S NOT FOR A HUNDRED YEARS!

IT'S JUST SUPPOSED TO LAST LONG ENOUGH TO GET YOU THROUGH THE VIEWING AT THE FUNERAL!



WELL, I CERTAINLY DON'T INTEND TO DO BUSINESS WITH A FIRM THAT DOESN'T GIVE A LIFETIME GUARANTEE! GOOD DAY!

SIX FEET UNDER



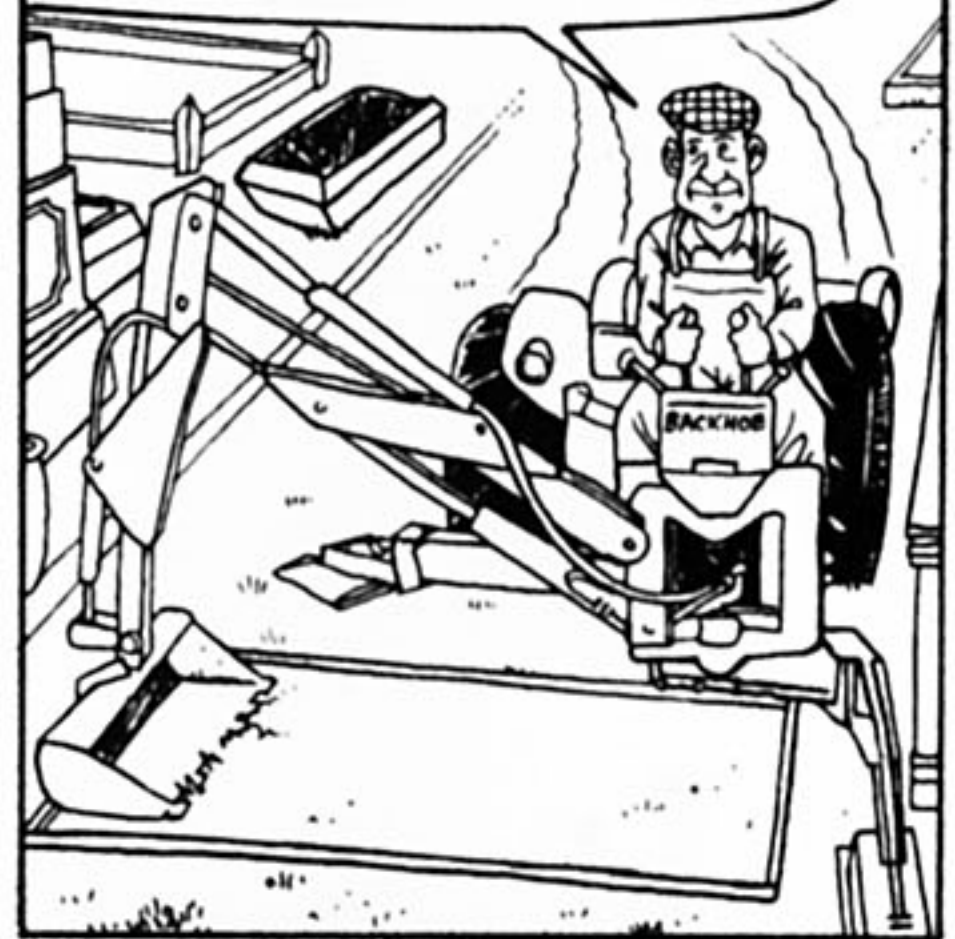
I BEEN DIGGIN' GRAVES HERE FOR WHAT? - CLOSE TO 40 YEARS NOW, I GUESS. OH, IT'S NOT WHAT IT USED TO BE. I GUESS YA MIGHT SAY IT'S A DYIN' ART.



WHEN I FIRST STARTED, WE'D SOMETIMES HAVE TO USE A JACK-HAMMER IF THERE WAS FROST OR A LOT OF ROCKS. THEN WE'D FINISH 'ER OFF WITH A SHOVEL TO GET THE NICE STRAIGHT SIDES.



TODAY WE USE A BACKHOE, MADE FOR DIGGIN' GRAVES. DON'T MATTER IF IT'S NEAT-- CASKET-LOWERIN' MACHINES HIDE EVERYTHING ANYWAY. NOWADAYS IT'S JUST A HOLE, NOT A GRAVE.



THEN WE FILL 'ER BACK UP WITH A DUMPTRUCK.

IT AIN'T GLAMOROUS, BUT IT'S POPULAR. YOU HAVE A BODY ON YER HANDS, YOU WANT TO BURY IT. THAT'S NATURAL.

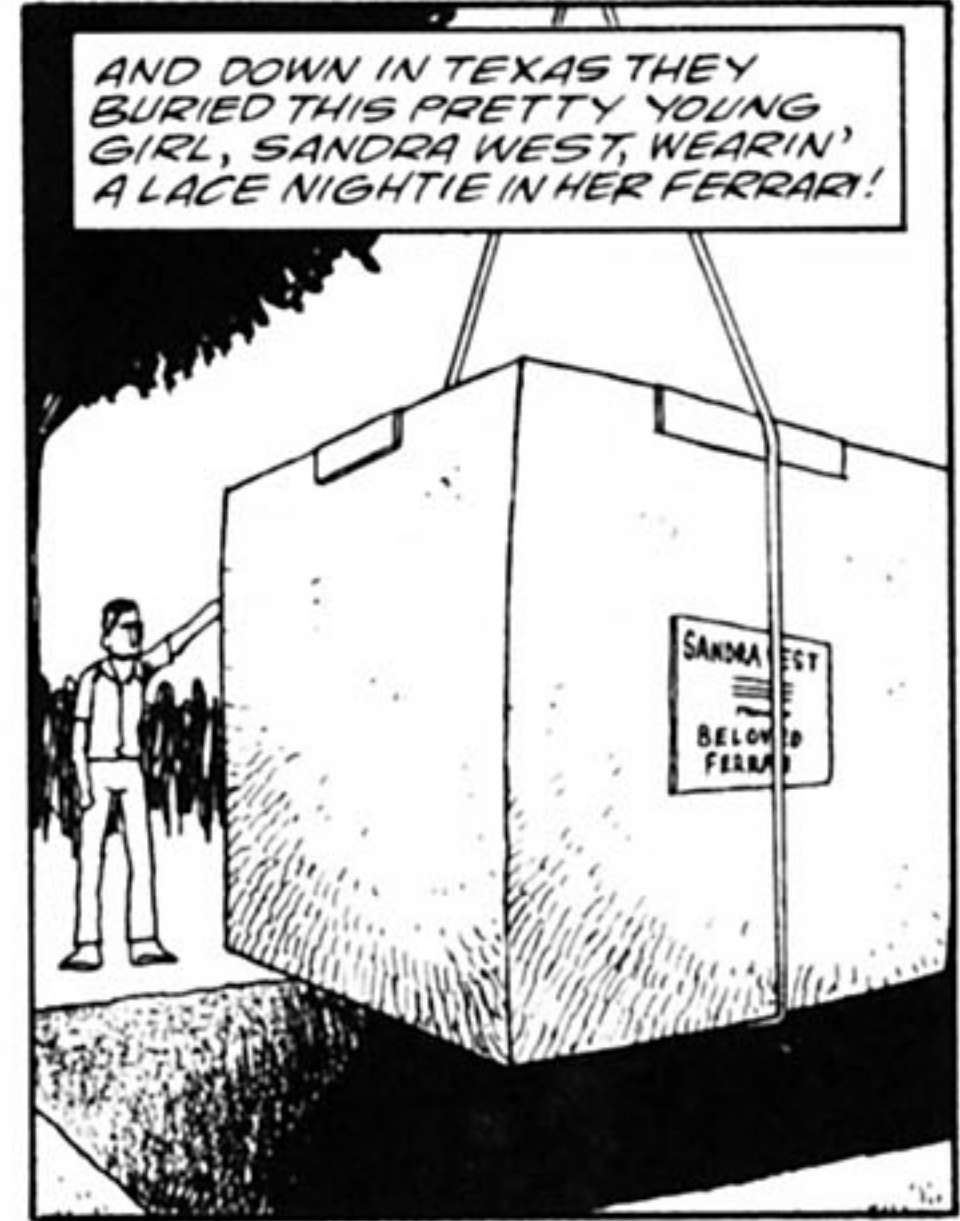
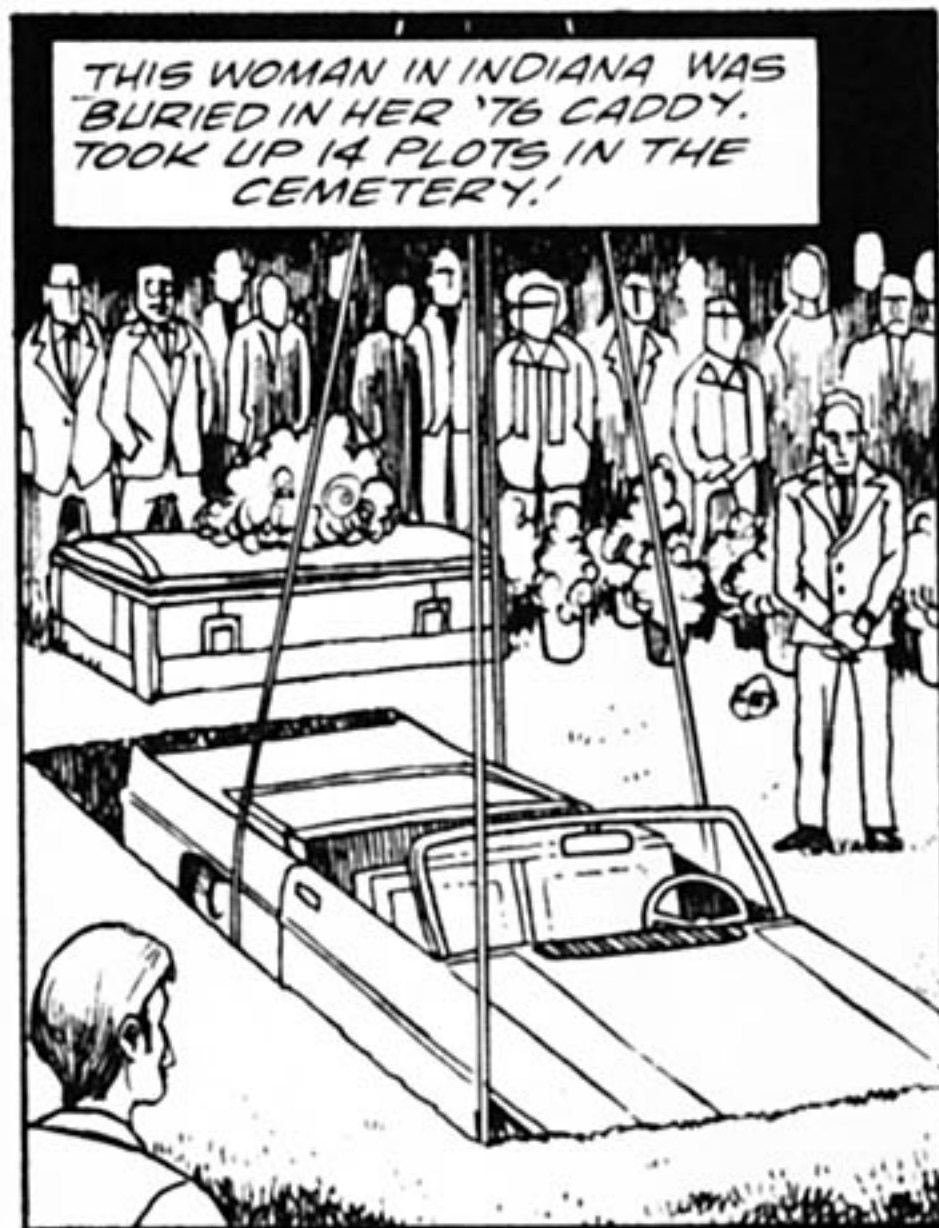


LIKE THOSE 3 BOYS OUT ON LONG ISLAND A FEW YEARS BACK. THE PARENTS WERE AWAY, THE BOYS WERE DOIN' DRUGS OR SOMETHIN', I DON'T KNOW. THESE KIDS TODAY...

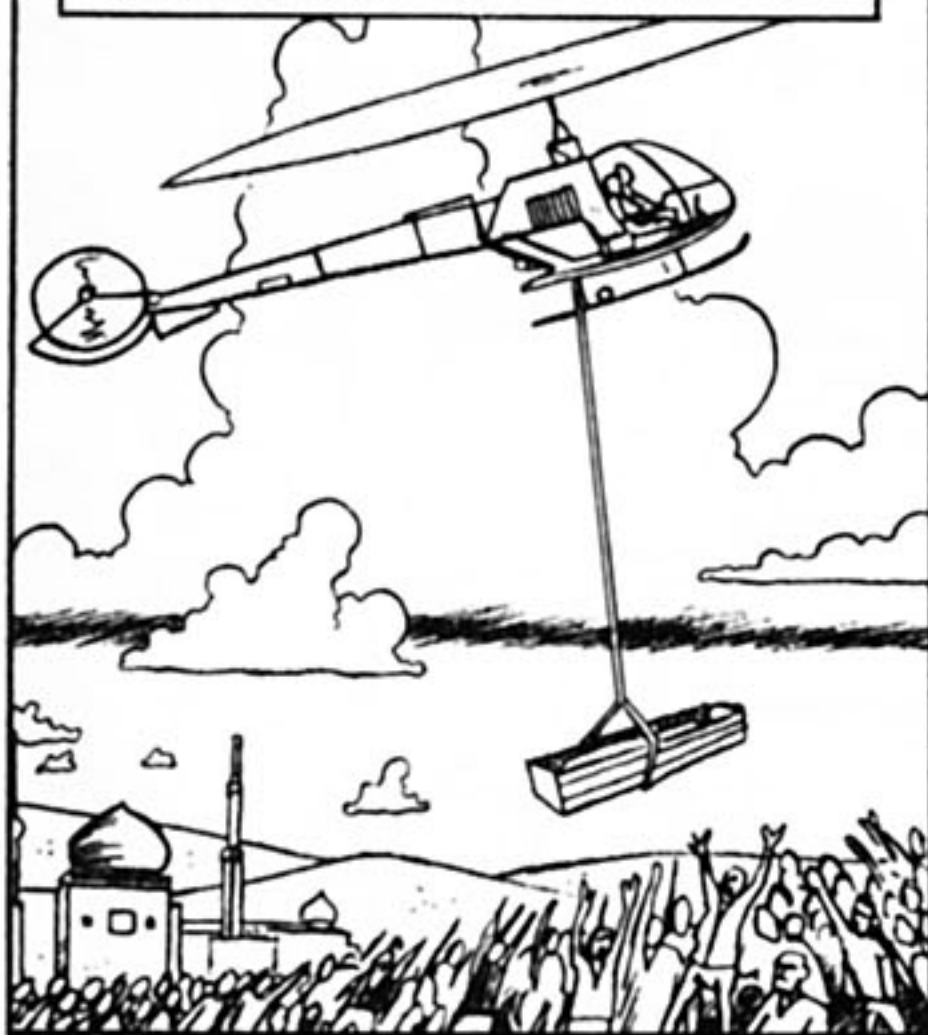


WELL, ONE OF 'EM OVERDOSES SOMEHOW OR HAS AN ACCIDENT OR SOMETHING. ANYWAY, HE DIES. AND WHAT DO THEY DO WITH HIM?





SO THEY USED A HELICOPTER TO CARRY HIS COFFIN OVER THE CROWD, SET IT DOWN WHERE THE GRAVE WAS GONNA BE.



I GUESS HIS PEOPLE JUST LOVED HIM TOO MUCH. THEY WERE ALL PUSHIN' AND SHOVIN', JUST TRYIN' TO TOUCH THE BODY, AND THE COFFIN HAD NO COVER. DOWN WENT THE AYATOLLAH, INTO THE DIRT!

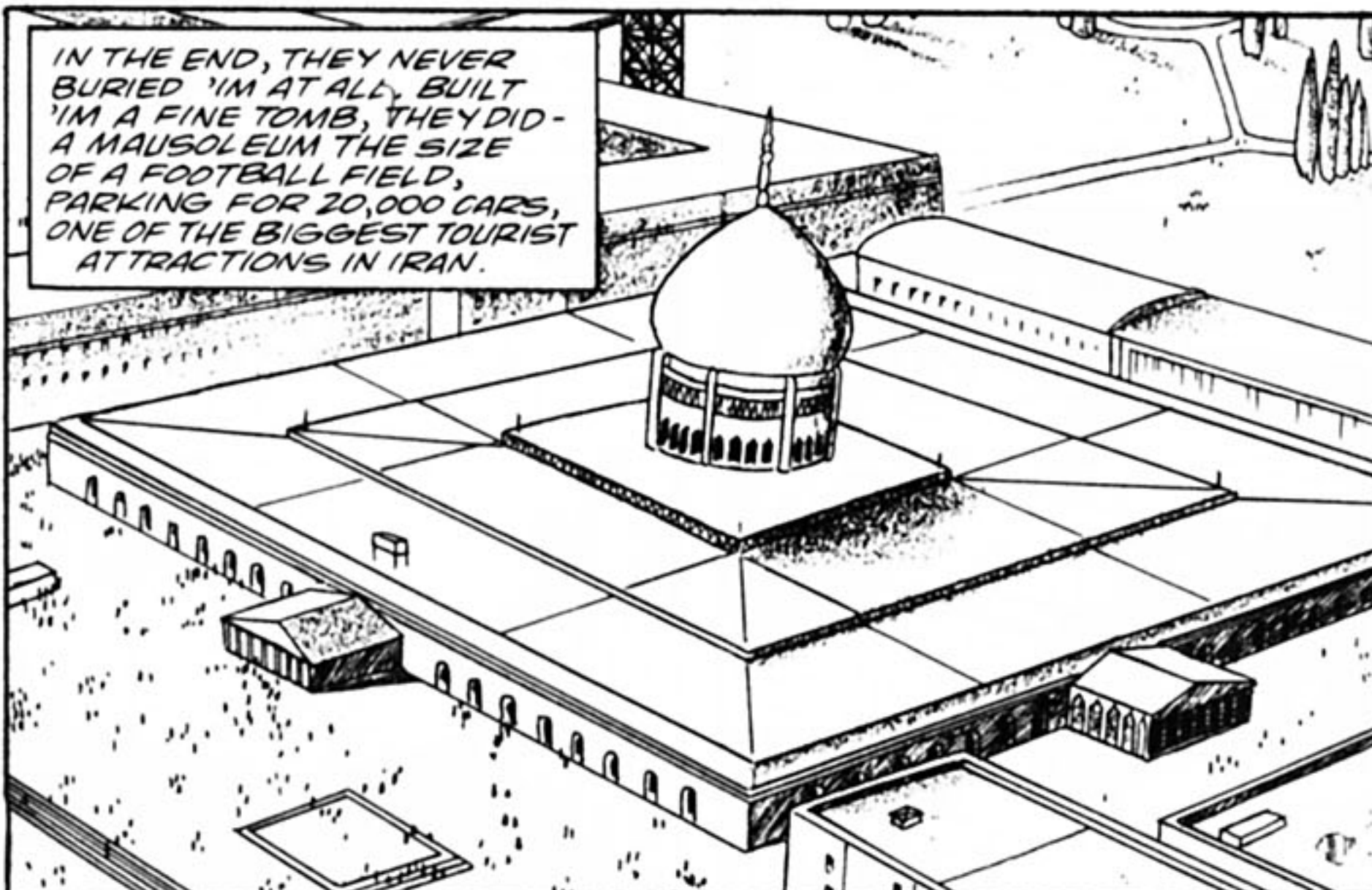


SO BACK IN THE BOX WITH 'IM, AND OFF THEY FLEW! NO BURIAL THAT DAY!



AND EVEN SO, THERE WAS 8 PEOPLE CRUSHED TO DEATH IN THE CROWD.

IN THE END, THEY NEVER BURIED 'IM AT ALL. BUILT 'IM A FINE TOMB, THEY DID - A MAUSOLEUM THE SIZE OF A FOOTBALL FIELD, PARKING FOR 20,000 CARS, ONE OF THE BIGGEST TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IN IRAN.



THAT'S THE WAVE OF THE FUTURE - MAUSOLEUMS. NO ONE WANTS TO BE PUT IN THE GROUND ANYMORE. THEY'D RATHER BE STORED AWAY IN A BIG MARBLE DRAWER.



WELL, IT'S TRUE THE OLD CEMETERIES ARE GETTIN' CROWDED.



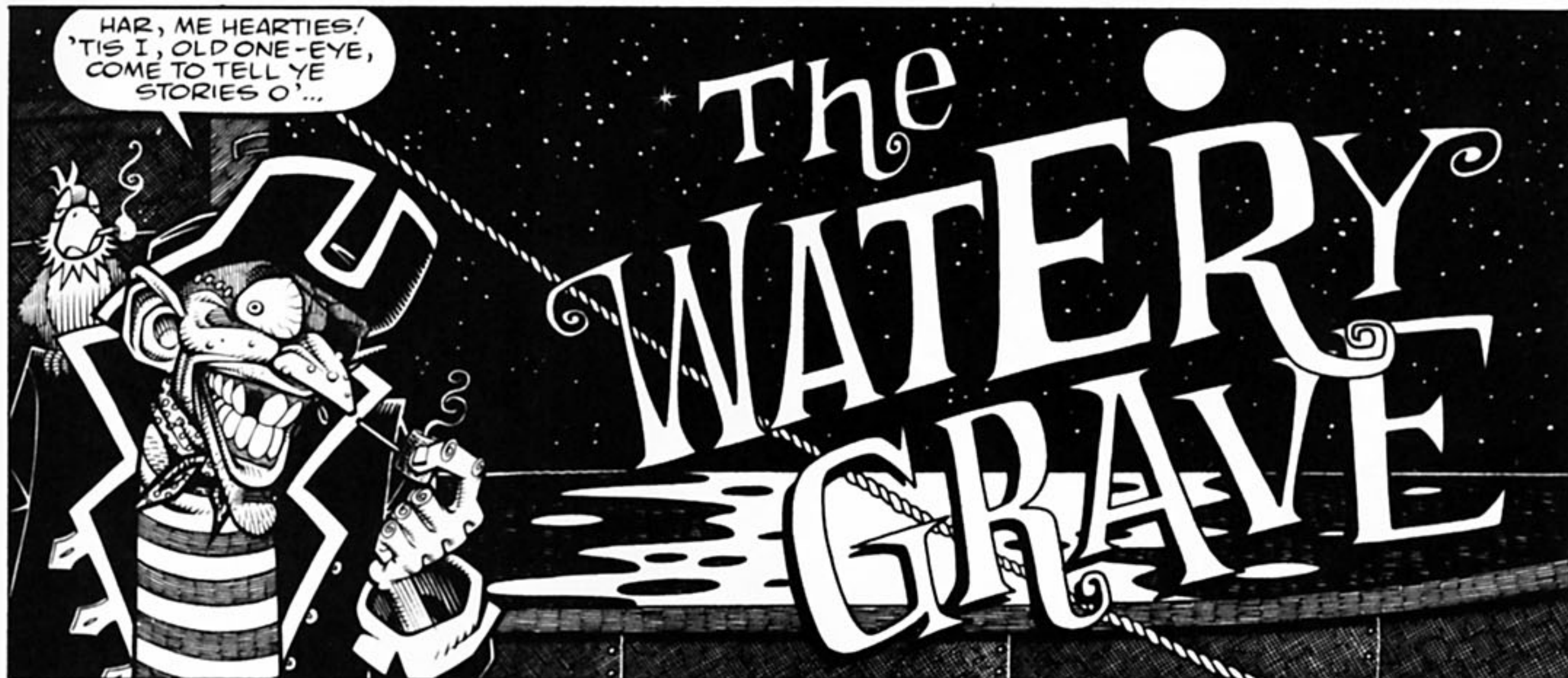
BUT I THINK IT'S MOSTLY THAT THEY WANT THEIR RESTIN' PLACES CLEAN AND SANITARY. I TELL YA, IT AIN'T NATURAL!



LIKE I SAID, GRAVE-DIGGIN'S A DYIN' ART--

--BUT, HEY, IT'S A LIVIN'!





PROVIDIN' YE FILLS OUT THE PROPER FORMS! THERE'S THE GENERAL BURIAL-AT-SEA PERMIT, THE SHIP-PING PERMIT, THE EPA REPORT, THE BOAT-CHARTER CONTRACT...

AWWKK!



...AND IF THE NAVY'S HANDLIN' THE MATTER, IT'S EVEN WORSE! YE'LL NEED SIGNED AUTHORIZATION FROM YER KIN, AN APPROVED BURIAL PERMIT, A CERTIFIED COPY O' THE DEATH CERTIFICATE...



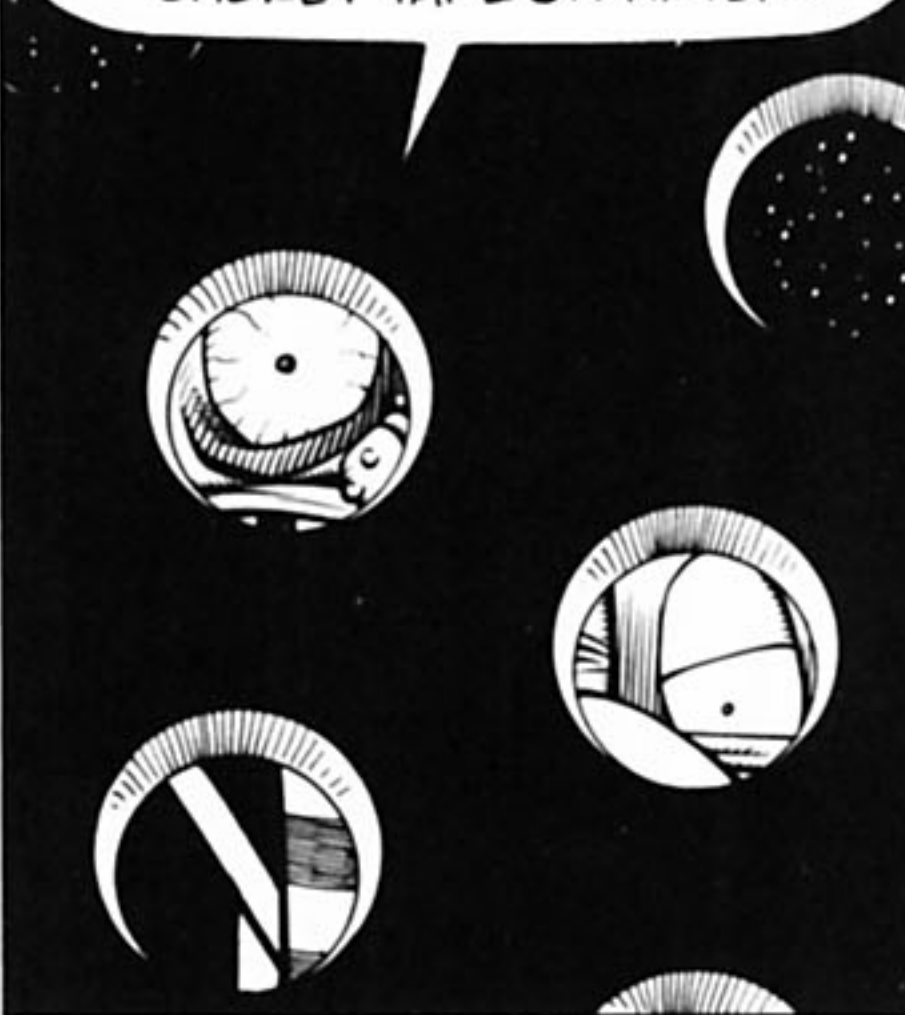
...AN' THE NAVY SAYS YE NEEDS A REGULATION METAL CASKET!



THE CASKET'S GOTTA HAVE ONE HUNDRED POUNDS OF ROCKS OR SAND INSIDE FOR BALLAST, AS WELL AS YER OWN BODY.



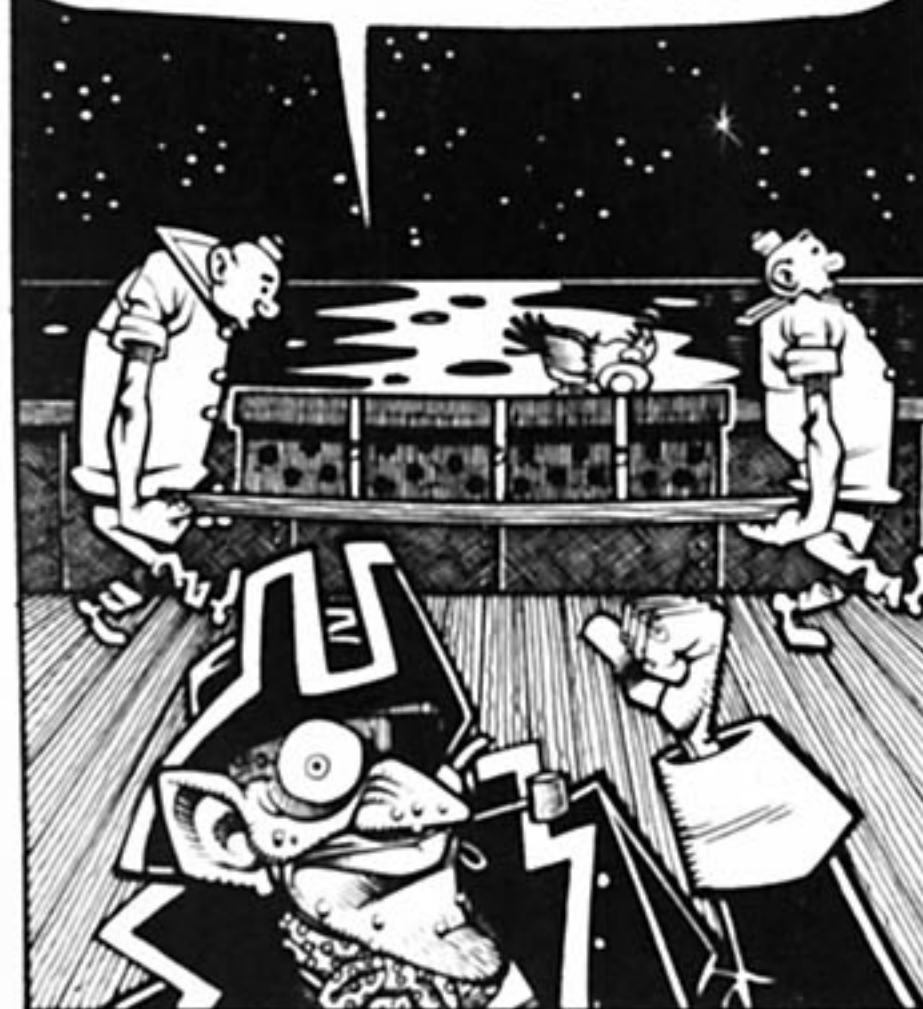
AN' JUST TO BE SURE YER DEEP-SIXED PROPER, THERE'S GOT TO BE AT LEAST TEN TWO-INCH HOLES DRILLED IN THE SIDES TO LET YER CASKET TAKE ON WATER.



AN' ON ACCOUNT OF THEM HOLES, YE'VE GOT TO BE WRAPPED IN A SHROUD. AN' ON ACCOUNT OF IT MAY TAKE THE NAVY A WHILE TO GET TO YE, YE MUST BE EMBALMED AS WELL.



AN' TO KEEP THE LID OF YER BOX FROM FLOATIN' AWAY, IT MUST BE WRAPPED ABOUT WITH METAL STRAPS. DAVY JONES' OWN LOCKER WAS NEVER SO SECURE!



AY, 'TIS STRANGE. YE MIGHT CHOOSE BURIAL AT SEA AS A RETURN TO THE GREAT OCEAN, BECOMIN' ONE WITH THE FISHES AN' ALL THAT...



...BUT I'LL BE HORN-SWAGGLED IF THE FISH WON'T NEED A CAN OPENER TO GET YE OUT!







CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER: AFTER YOU ARE CREMATED, YOUR ASHES MAY BE...



a. sent to
your next
of kin.



b. placed in
a decorative
urn.



c. scattered
by hand.



d. poured
into the
ocean.



e. dumped
from an
airplane.
("aerial
burial")

f. All of the above.

CREMATION - The BEST METHOD OF CORPSE DISPOSAL!



TRIDENT CREMATION SOCIETY

Transportation from hospital

Cremation

Burial at sea

TOTAL COST: \$500.

CUSTOMARY BROTHERS FUNERAL HOME

Transportation from hospital

Embalming fee

Cosmetician's fee

Casket

Flowers

Chapel fee

Minister's fee

Organist's fee

Transportation to cemetery

Burial plot

Opening, closing grave

TOTAL COST: \$10,000

WHY PAY MORE?







EVISCKERATION!



DON'T BE ALARMED,
MY FRIENDS—THIS
IS A CORPSE,
IT FEELS
NOTHING!

EVISCKERATION,
OR REMOVAL
OF THE VISCERA
—THE HEART,
LUNGS, INTESTINES
—IS THE KEY TO
PRESERVATION
OF THE BODY!



OF COURSE,
WE PRESERVE THESE ORGANS
SEPARATELY. PLACED IN
URNS WITH ALCOHOL
AND HERBS —



—THEY
WILL BE
AVAILABLE
SHOULD THE
LATE PHARAOH
NEED THEM
AT ANY
FUTURE
DATE.



YES, ALL THE NECESSARY
ORGANS ARE PRESERVED.
ONLY ONE ORGAN WAS
THOUGHT BY THE ANCIENT
EGYPTIANS TO BE USELESS
FOR THE RESURRECTED
LIFE —



— THE BRAIN!
THEY THREW
AWAY THE
BRAIN! WHY
WOULD A
PHARAOH
NEED ONE
OF THOSE,
EH?



NOW, AFTER THE
LOVELY NEFERTITI
FILLS THE BODY CAVITY
WITH PERFUMES, I WILL
CLOSE THE INCISION!



NEXT, WE PACK
THE BODY IN NITER
FOR TWO MONTHS, THEN
SOAK IT IN WINE,
AND THEN —



—WE WRAP
IT UP!



OF COURSE, WE HAVE NOT ACTUALLY PERFORMED A MUMMIFICATION HERE FOR YOU TODAY. IT IS A LONG AND COMPLICATED PROCESS, INTENDED TO ENSURE THE AFTERLIFE OF THE PHARACH.



HOWEVER, WITHIN THIS SARCOPHAGUS —

— LIES THE ACTUAL MUMMY OF THE BOY-KING, PHARAOH TUT-RA III! I INVITE YOU ALL TO COME FORWARD...



... AND FOR AN ADDITIONAL ONE DOLLAR, VIEW THE REMAINS OF ONE WHO WAS KING THREE-THOUSAND YEARS AGO!



STEP UP, STEP UP, GIVE EVERYONE A CHANCE... SEE THE MUMMY, DIRECT FROM CAIRO! AND DON'T FORGET, MY FRIENDS, AS YOU LEAVE TODAY, LOOK FOR THE STAND OUTSIDE WHERE YOU WILL FIND FOR SALE OUR OWN EGYPTIAN OINTMENT, A SOOTHING BALM FOR ACES AND PAINS!



THANK YOU FOR COMING, FRIENDS, THANK YOU.



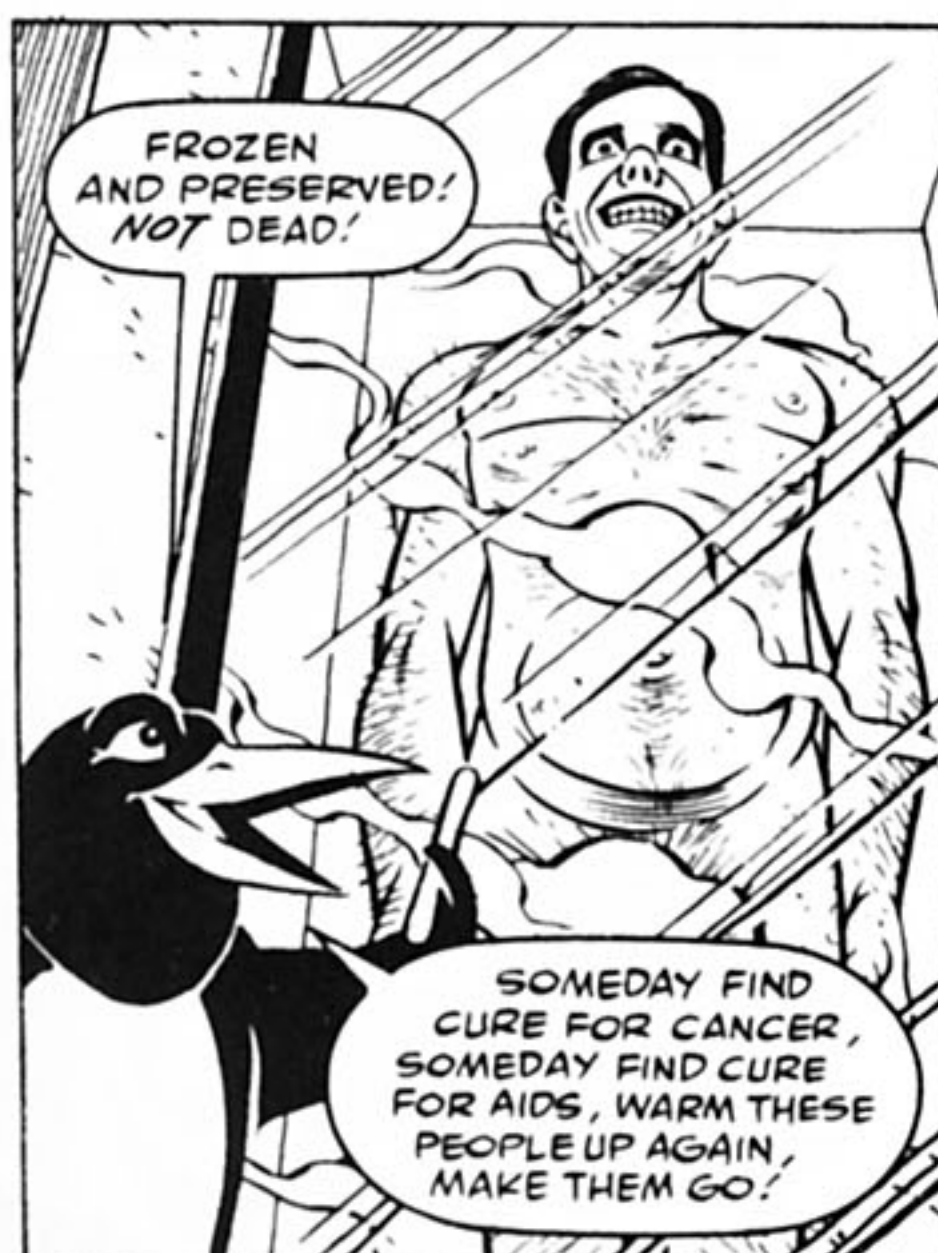
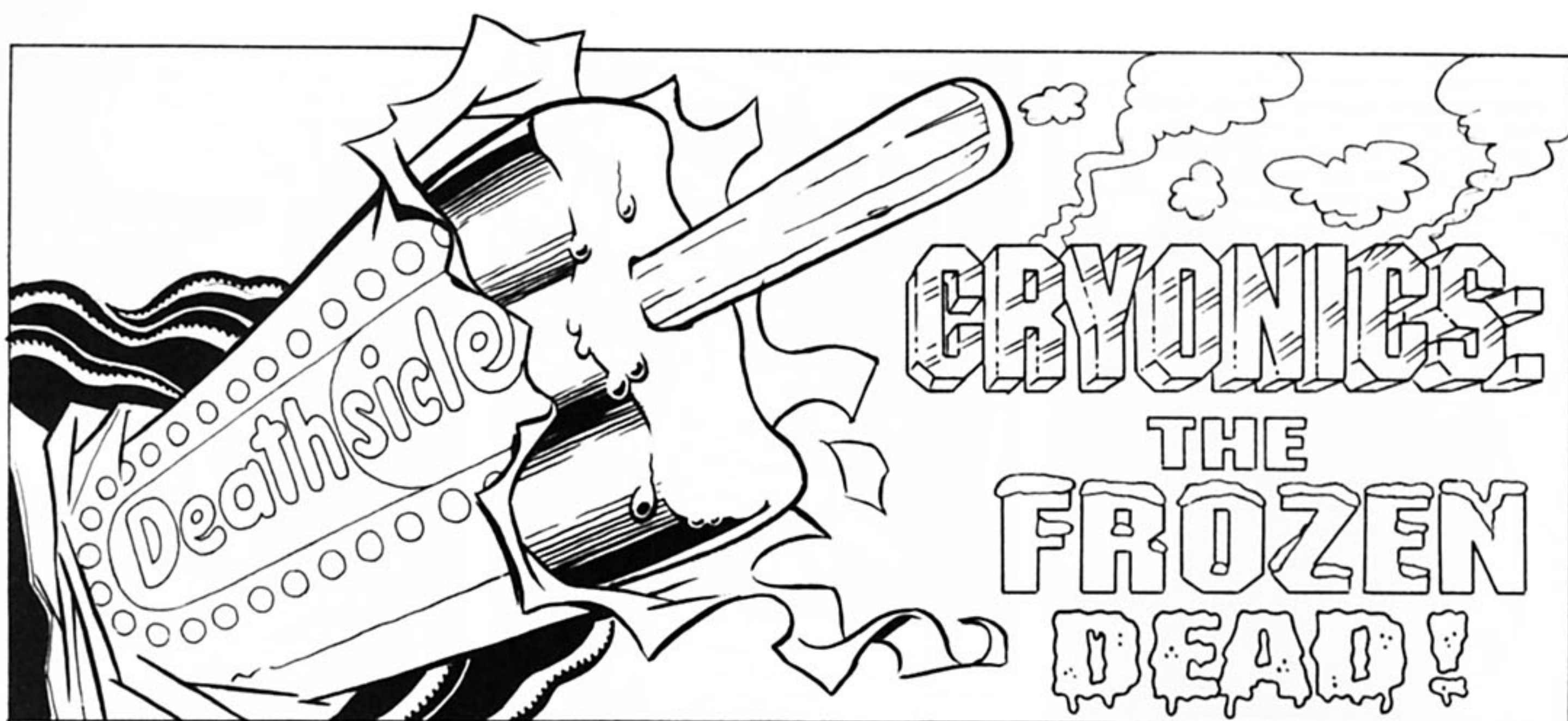
GOOD SHOW, CHOPSY. HOW'D WE DO?

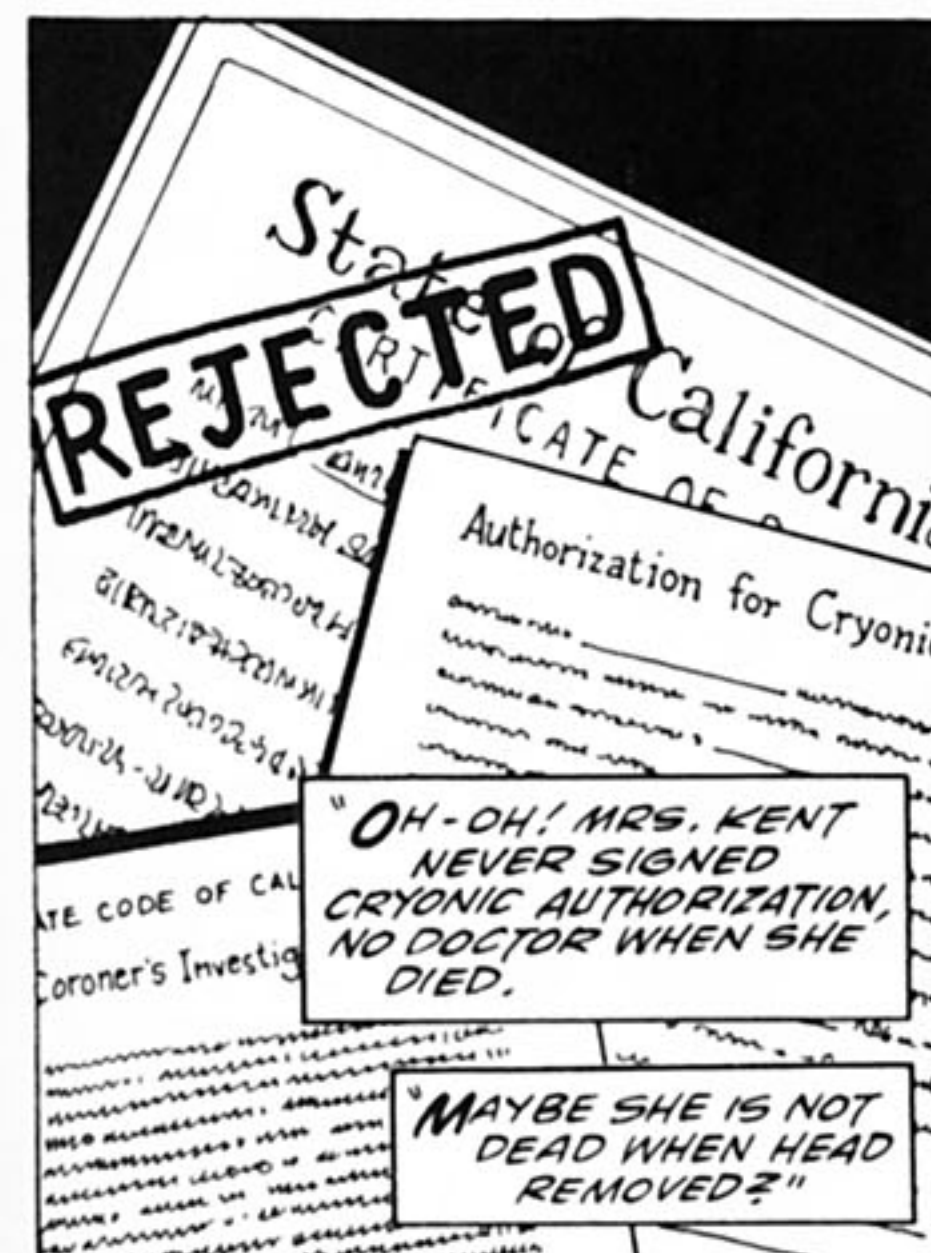
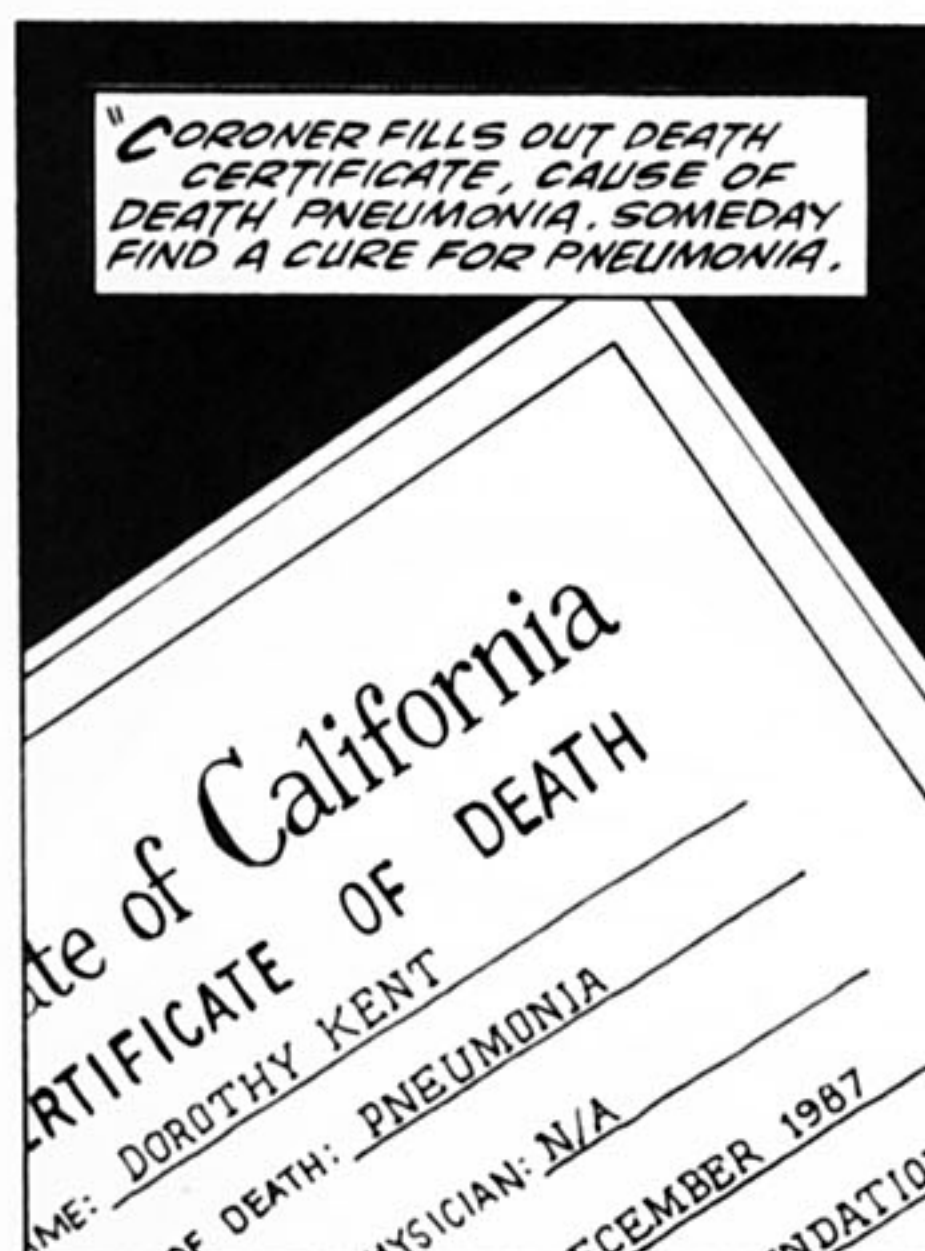
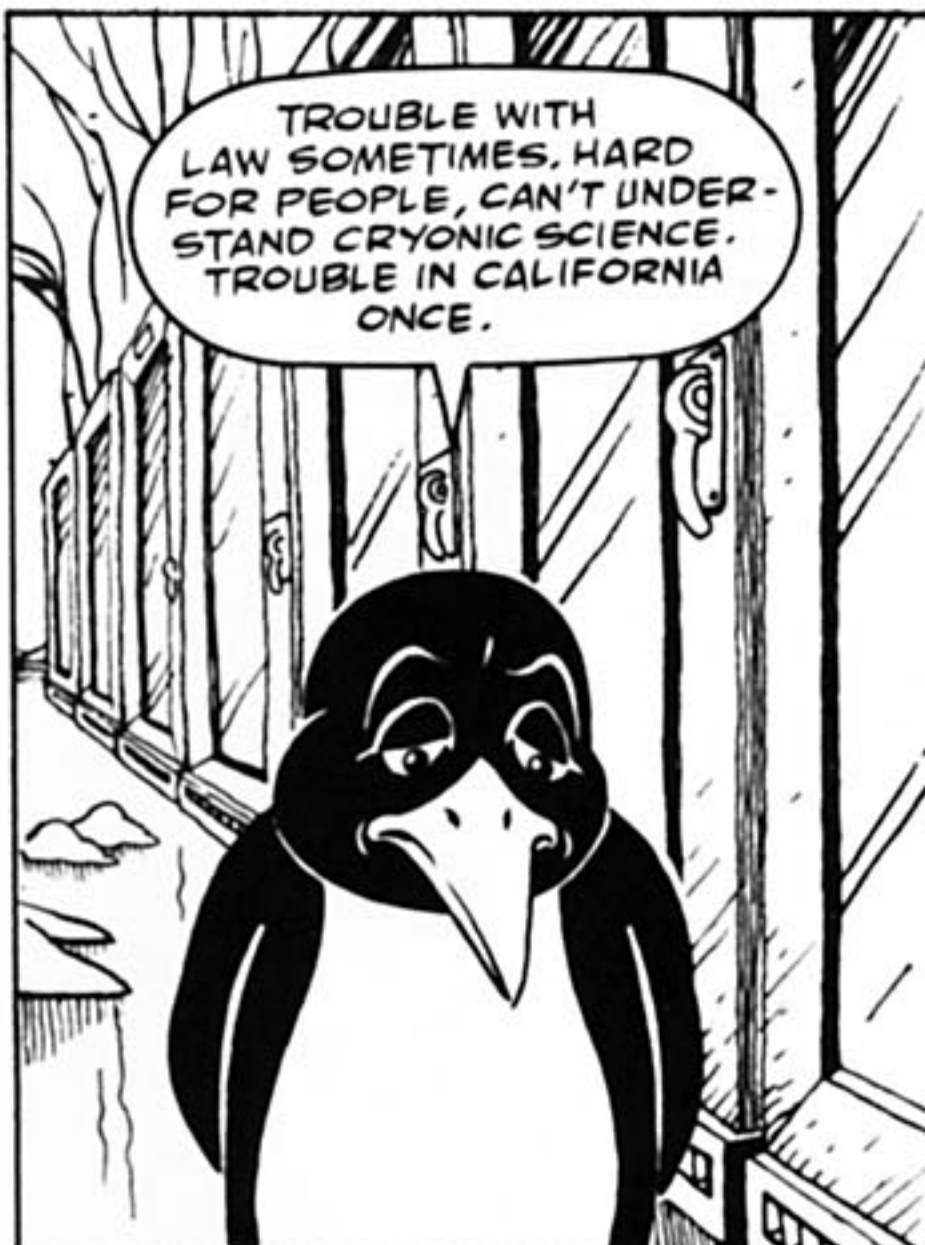
COUNTING THE GATE, FIFTY BUCKS.

CHOPSY, DID YOU REALLY BRING THAT MUMMY ALL THE WAY FROM CAIRO?



WHY, SURE, NETTIE—ALL THE WAY FROM CAIRO, ILLINOIS!







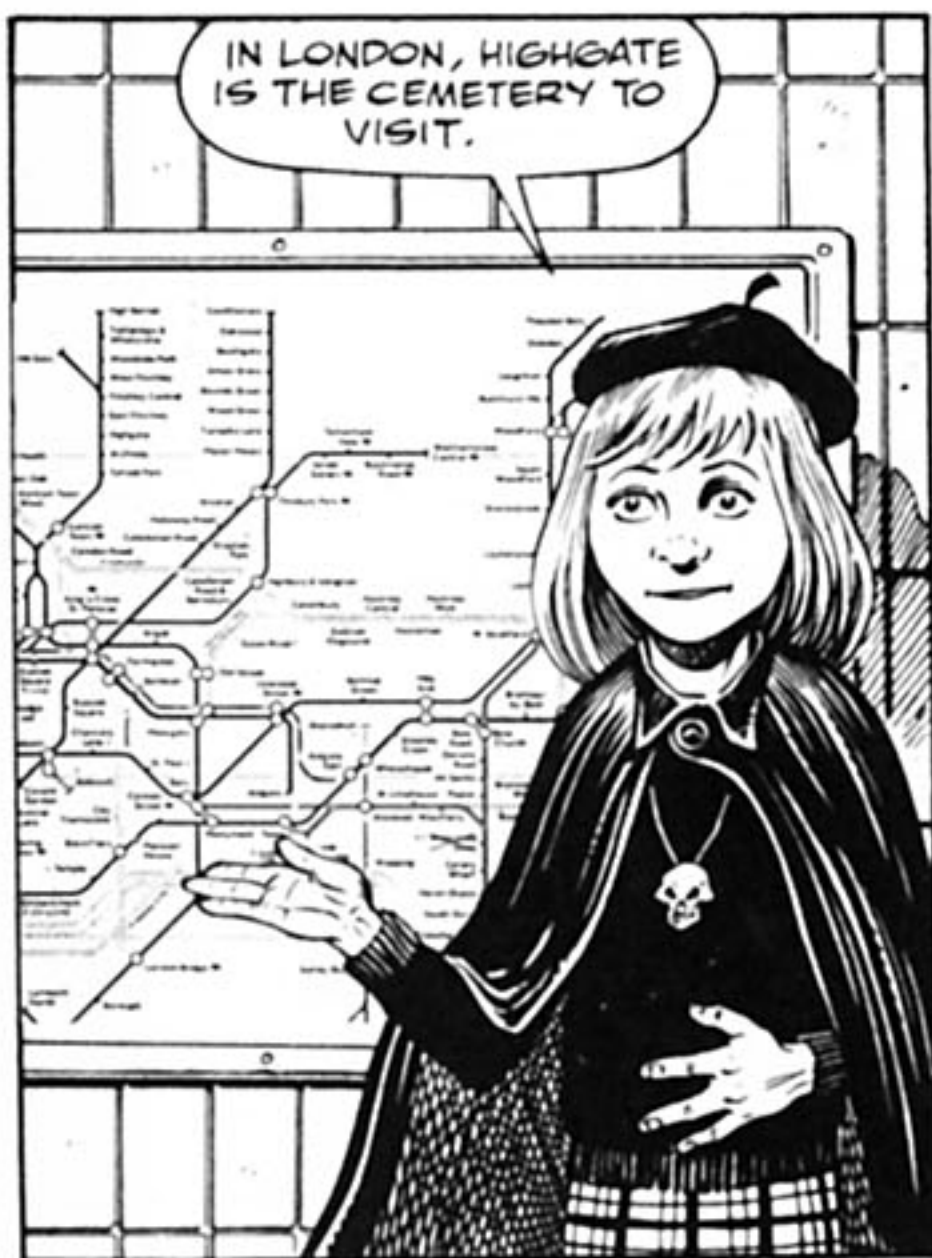
CHAPTER SIX

GRAVEYARD SHIFT

C E M E T E R Y T O U R S

There's no nicer way to while away some leisure time than a trip to the cemetery. Graveyards are quiet, green places where you can stroll around and develop a taste for the arts of stone carving and landscaping. Relax — enjoy yourself — that's what cemeteries are for. The 19th-century New England Transcendentalists who invented the garden-type cemetery wanted you to see death as just another beautiful part of Nature's Plan. So use your local cemetery — go jogging there, have a picnic, or just plant a friend! Here, thanks to our lovely host Maddy, you can tour the graveyards of faraway lands without leaving the comfort of your home! She'll show you some of the best, from Rome (*page 139*) to Paris (*page 133*) to Brooklyn (*page 147*) — and you won't even have to pack! Have fun!

A Walking Tour of Highgate Cemetery

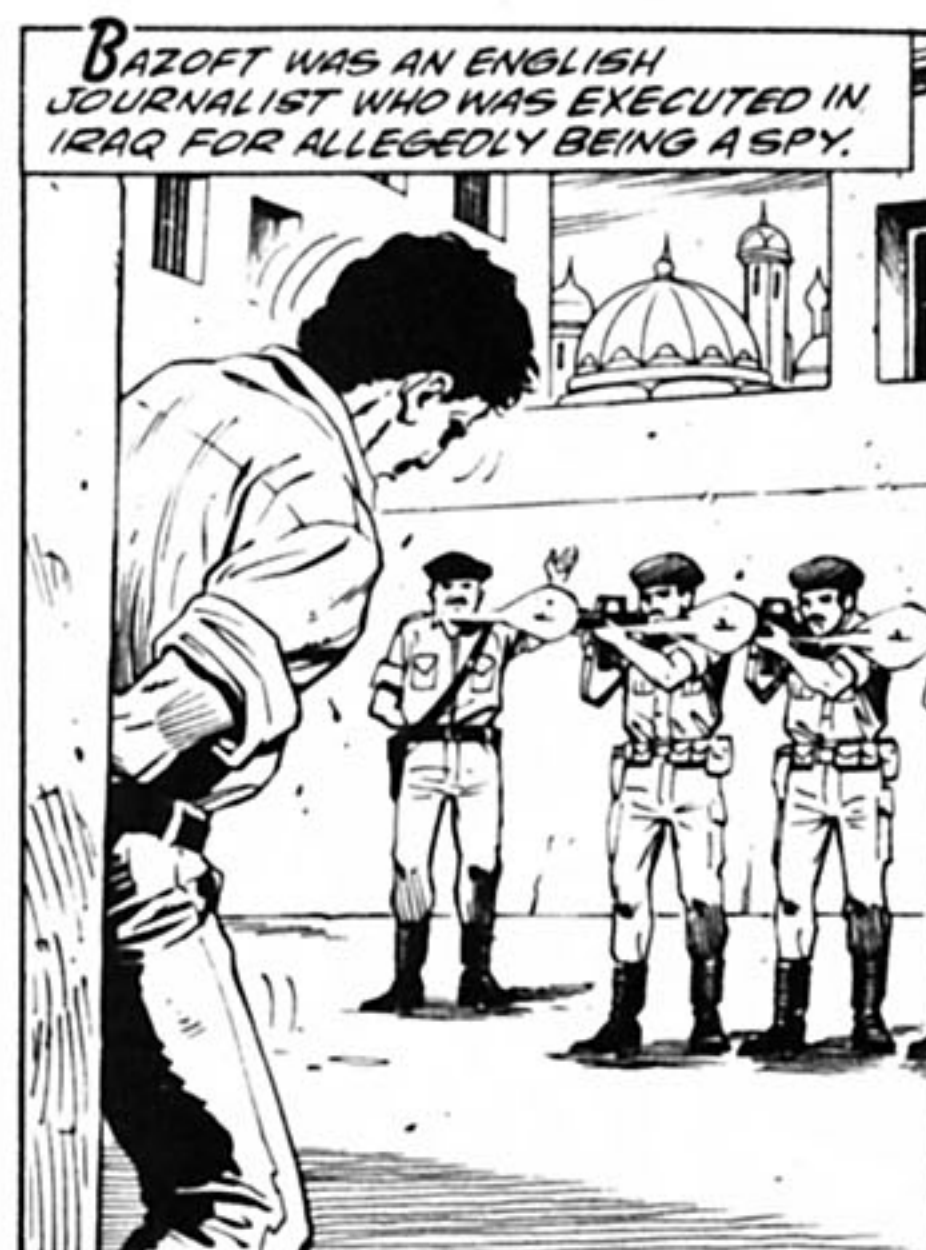




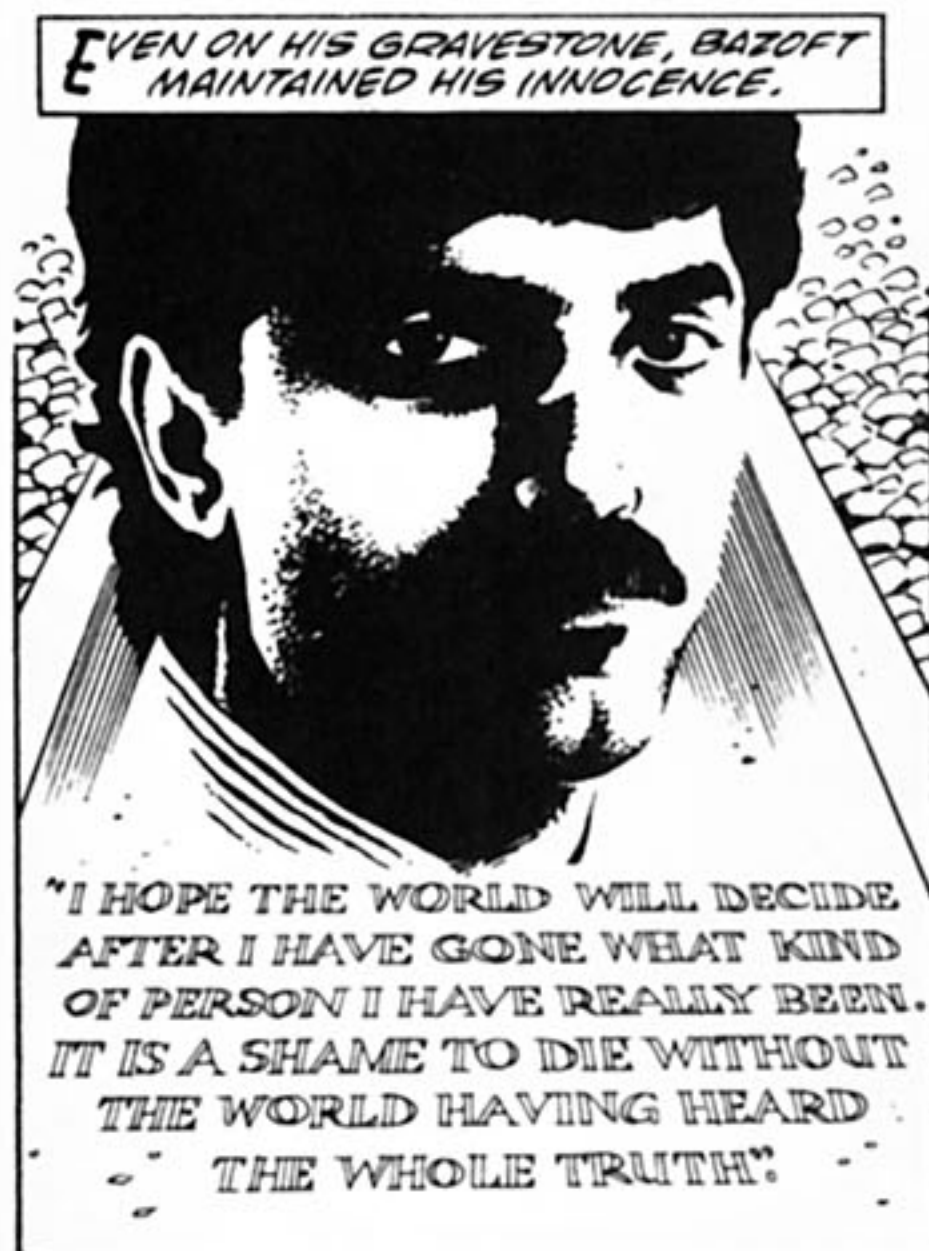
THE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA HELPS PAY FOR THE UPKEEP OF MARX'S MARKER.



I'M MORE IMPRESSED BY THE GRAVE OF FARZAD BAZOFT.



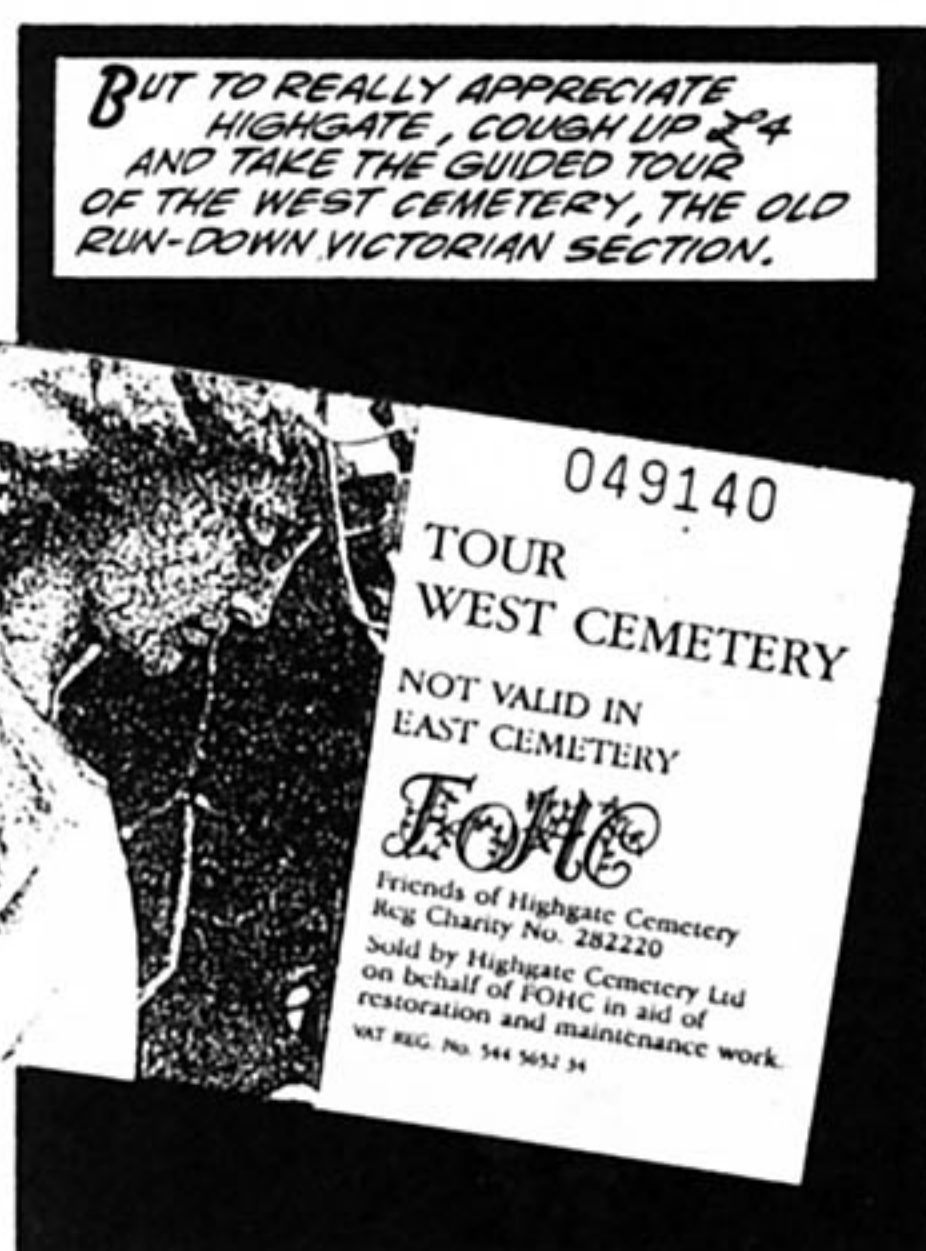
BAZOFT WAS AN ENGLISH JOURNALIST WHO WAS EXECUTED IN IRAQ FOR ALLEGEDLY BEING A SPY.



EVEN ON HIS GRAVESTONE, BAZOFT MAINTAINED HIS INNOCENCE.



A VISIT TO THE EAST CEMETERY ALONE IS PLEASANT. IT'S LOW-KEY, PICTURESQUE, AND YOU CAN AMBLE ABOUT AND SEE SOME PRETTY GRAVES.



BUT TO REALLY APPRECIATE HIGHGATE, COUGH UP £4 AND TAKE THE GUIDED TOUR OF THE WEST CEMETERY, THE OLD RUN-DOWN VICTORIAN SECTION.



BECAUSE THE WEST CEMETERY IS BEING RESTORED, IT'S ACCESSIBLE ONLY BY GROUP TOURS.



IF YOU'RE VERY LUCKY, YOUR GUIDE WILL BE THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRIENDS OF HIGHGATE CEMETERY HERSELF.



MRS. HERSELF IS VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE FAMOUS PEOPLE BURIED HERE.

THERE IS MRS. WOOD, AND HERE IS CRUFT, OF THE FAMOUS DOG SHOW.





Le Cimetière du Père Lachaise

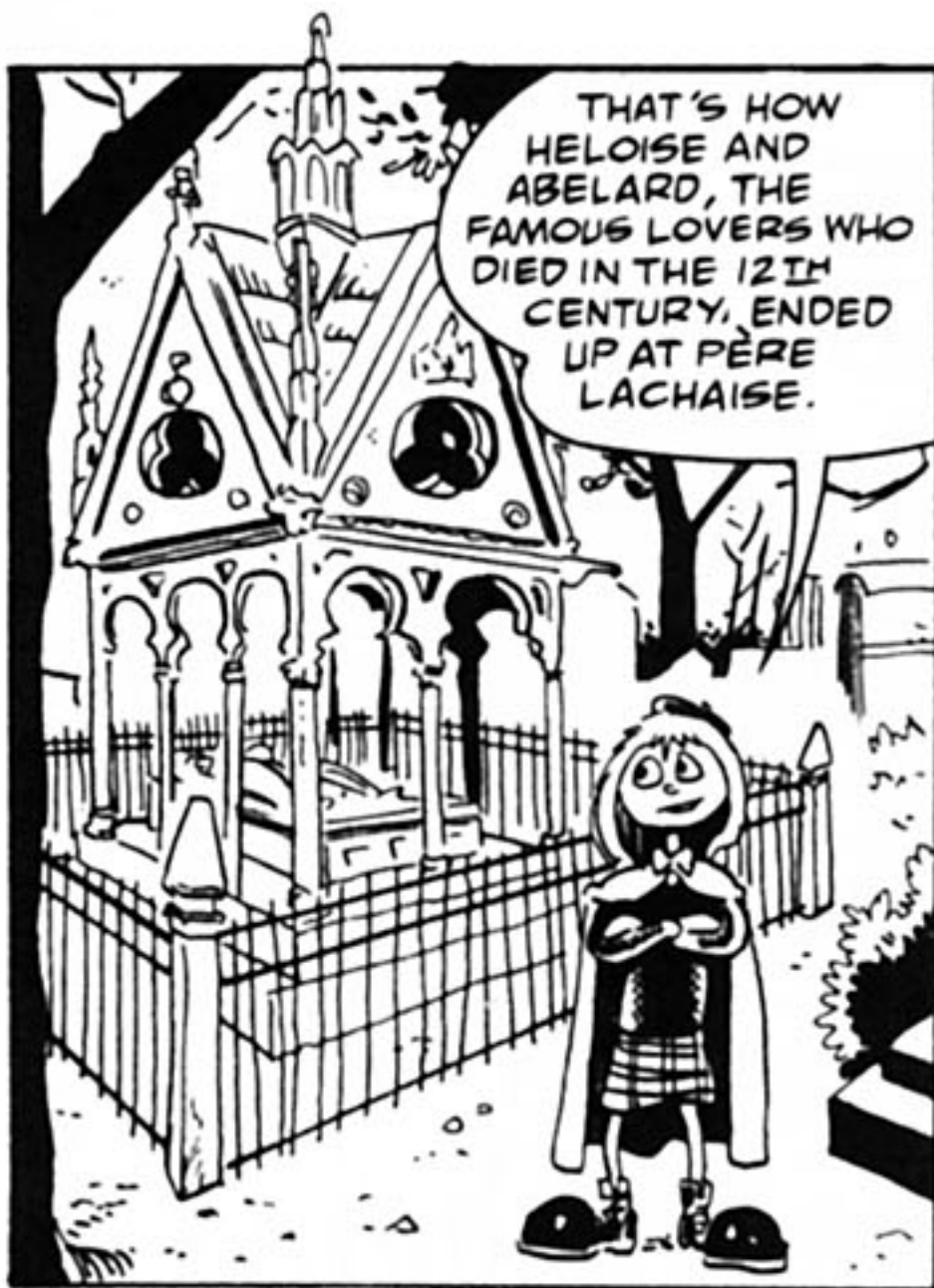


BY 1900, THERE WERE
2 MILLION BODIES IN
A 2-ACRE PLOT.



WHEN A MUDSLIDE BROKE
THROUGH A BUILDING NEXT
DOOR TO THE INNOCENTS, IT
WAS TIME TO OPEN A NEW
GRAVEYARD.





ANOTHER AMERICAN BURIED HERE IS GERTRUDE STEIN. SHE TRIED TO WRITE THE WAY THE CUBISTS PAINTED.



HER GRAVE MAKES YOU THINK ABOUT HOW THE GREATEST PEOPLE HAVE THE SIMPLEST TOMBSTONES.



VERY ELABORATE. THIS GUY WAS PROBABLY AN ACCOUNTANT OR SOMETHING.



THEY SAY, LADY HUNSTANTON, THAT WHEN GOOD AMERICANS DIE THEY GO TO PARIS.

INDEED? AND WHEN BAD AMERICANS DIE, WHERE DO THEY GO TO?



OH, THEY GO TO AMERICA.

OSCAR WILDE WROTE THAT. POOR OSCAR WILDE! FIRST THE ENGLISH THREW HIM IN PRISON FOR BEING GAY...



...AND THEN AN "ADMIRER" DONATED THIS HIDEOUS TOMBSTONE AFTER HE DIED OF AN EAR INFECTION IN 1900.



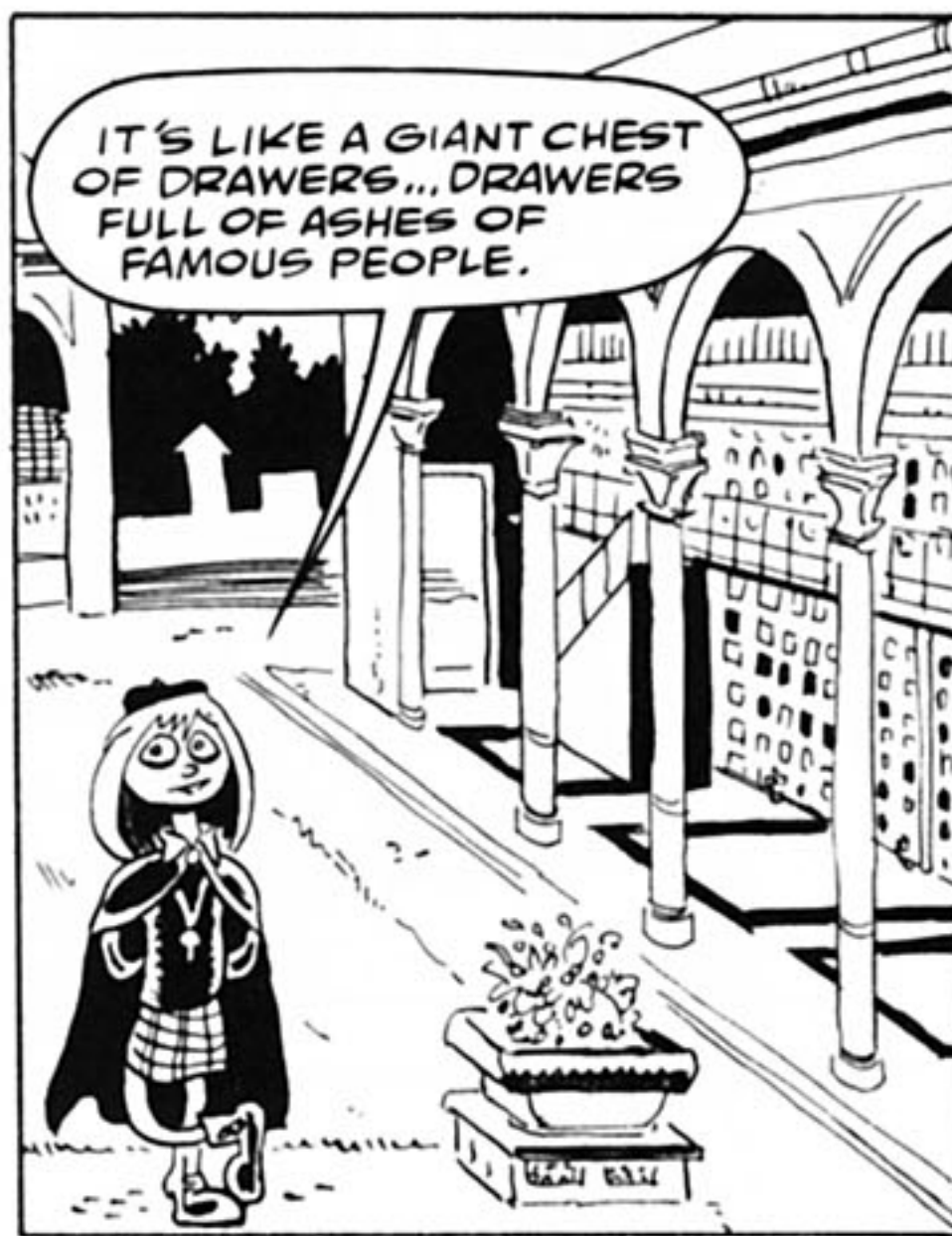
BUT HE WAS WITTY UNTIL THE END. HIS LAST WORDS WERE...

EITHER THIS WALLPAPER GOES, OR I DO.

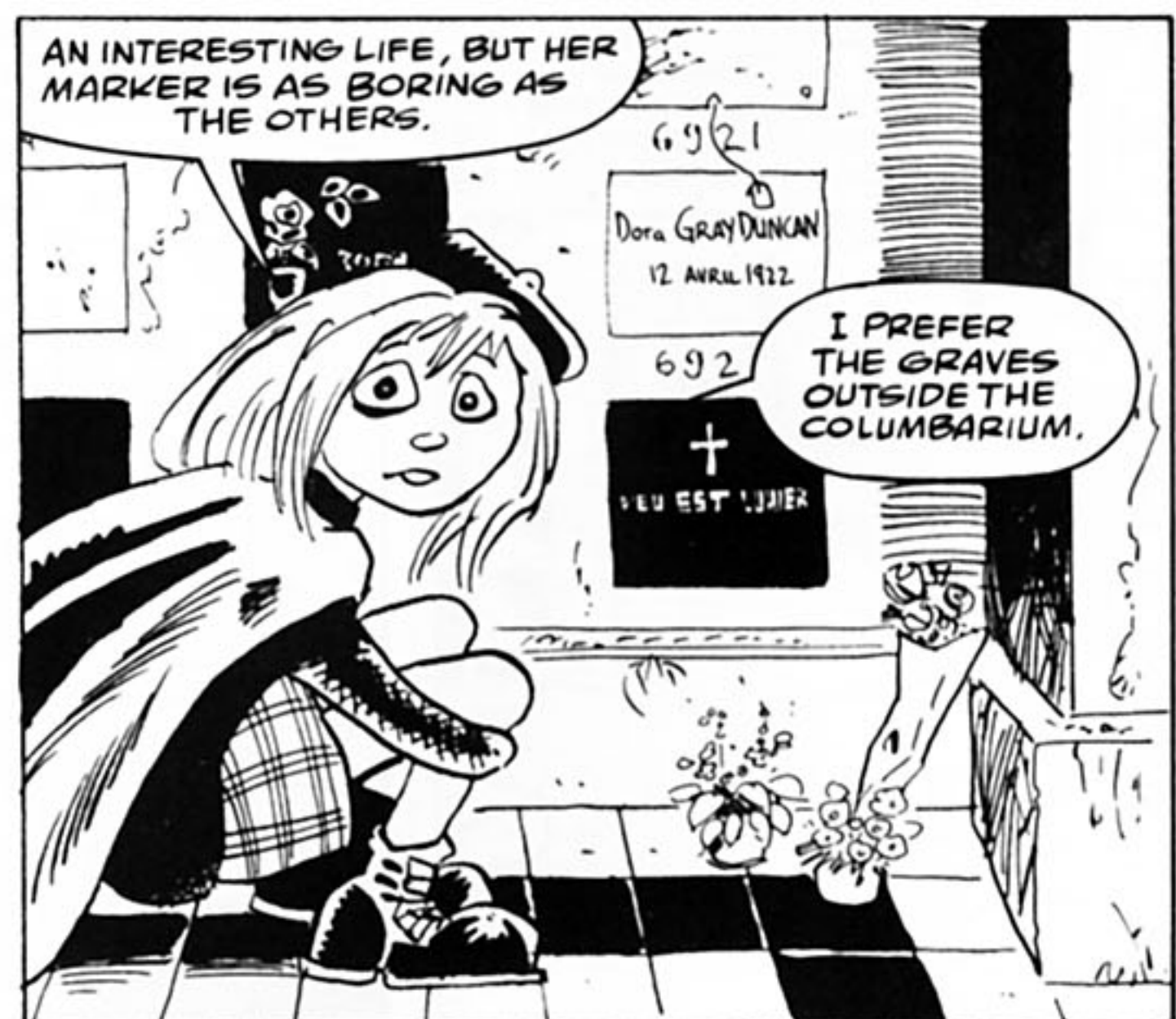
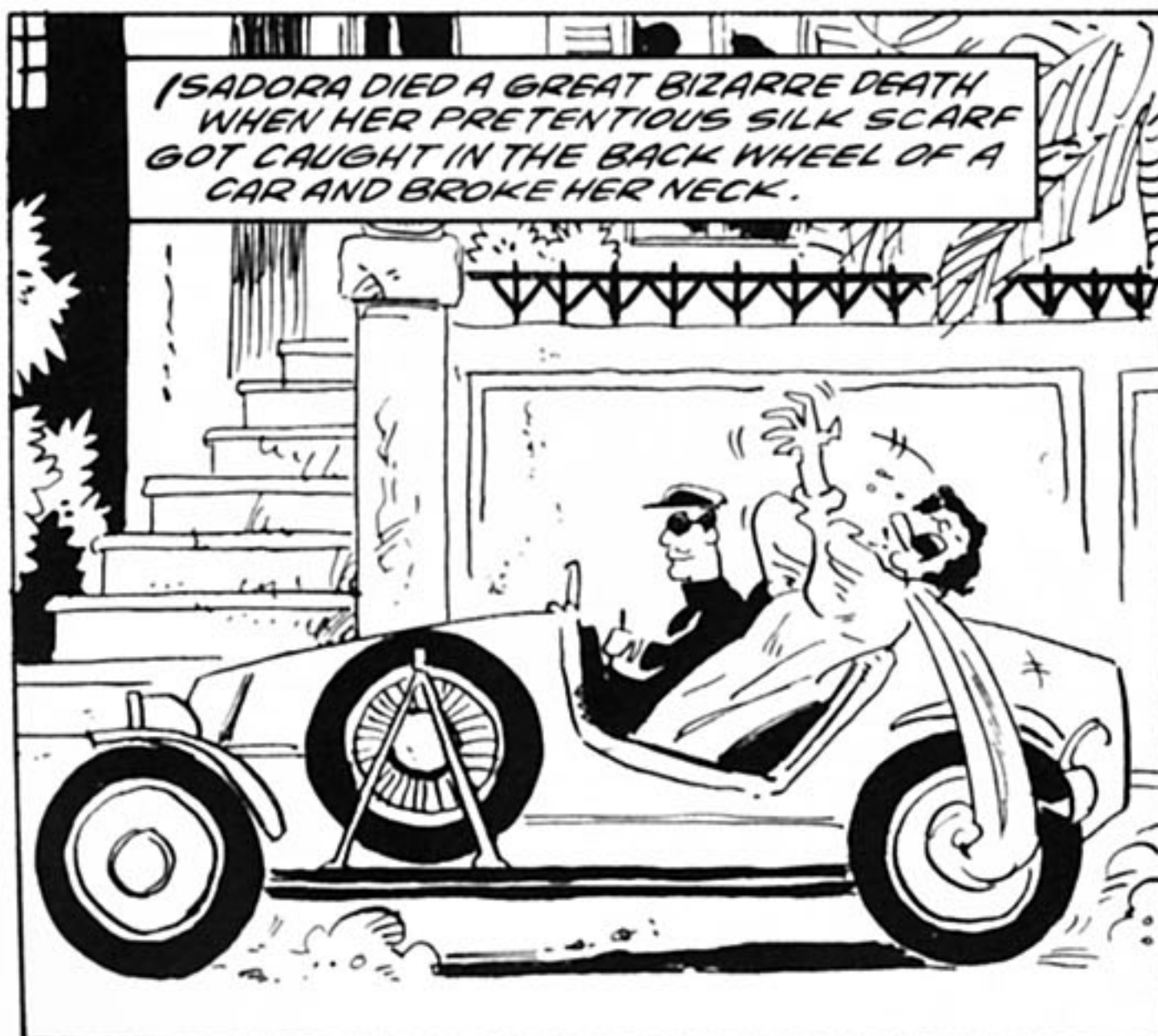


FROM WILDE'S GRAVE TAKE A RIGHT ON THE AVENUE TRANSVERSALE NO. 3 AND YOU'LL SEE THE COLUMBARIUM, WHERE THEY PUT THE ASHES OF CREMATED BODIES.





ISADORA DUNCAN'S ASHES ARE HERE, TOO, EVEN THOUGH SHE WAS FROM CALIFORNIA.





INTENSE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS LEAVING SINGLE WHITE ROSES AT MARCEL PROUST'S GRAVE.

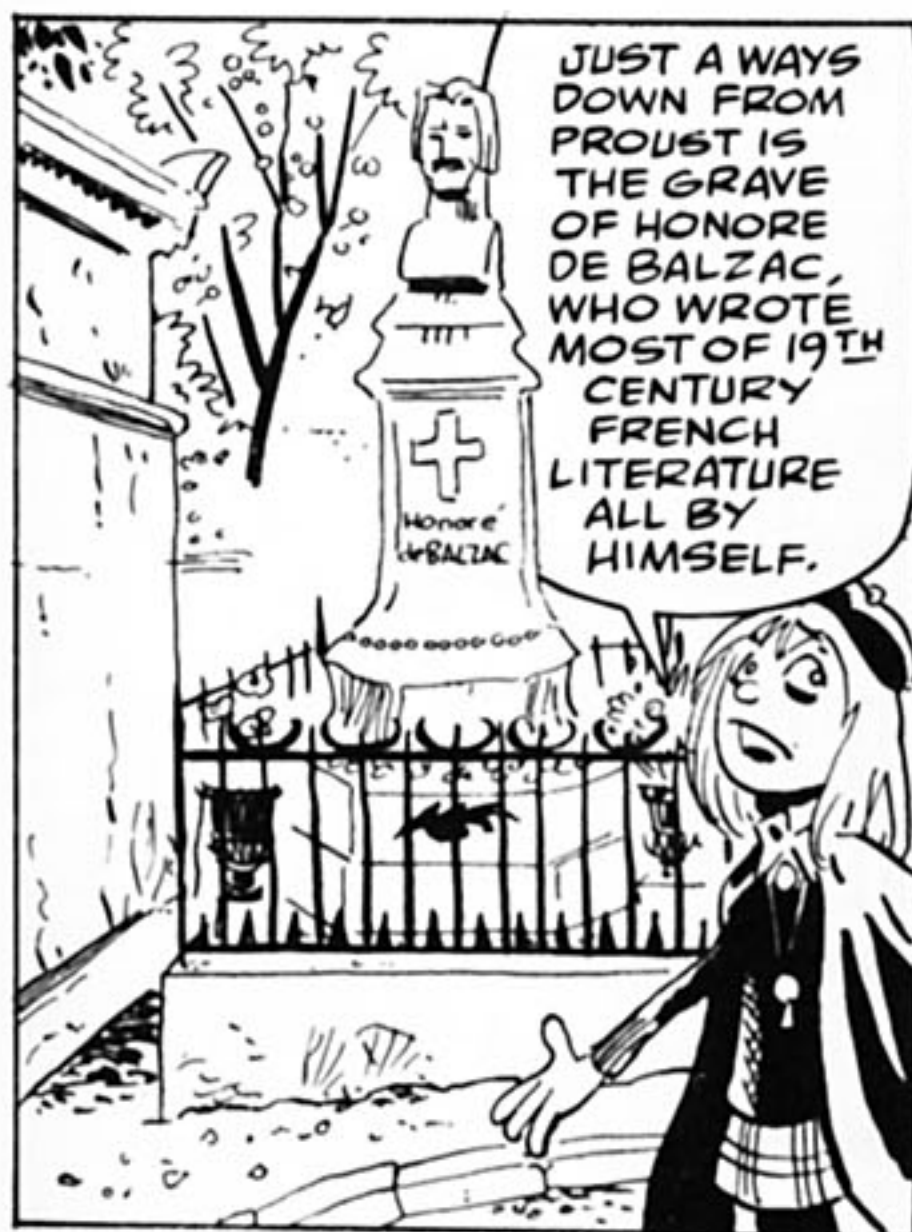


PROUST ALWAYS SAID HE DIDN'T LIKE LITERARY SNOBBERY, BUT IN REAL LIFE IT WAS A "RUSK BISCUIT" THAT BROUGHT BACK HIS CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

HE CHANGED IT TO A MADELAINE IN THE BOOK BECAUSE IT SOUNDED CLASSIER.



PROUST WAS SUCH A HYPOCHONDRIAC THAT NO ONE BELIEVED HE HAD PNEUMONIA IN 1922. BUT EVEN HYPOCHONDRIACS GET SICK AND DIE.



JUST A WAYS DOWN FROM PROUST IS THE GRAVE OF HONORE DE BALZAC, WHO WROTE MOST OF 19TH CENTURY FRENCH LITERATURE ALL BY HIMSELF.



BALZAC BURIED MANY OF HIS FICTIONAL CHARACTERS AT PERE LACHAISE, WHICH HELPED MAKE THE CEMETERY EVEN MORE POPULAR.



BALZAC WOULD SIT AROUND IN HIS BATHROBE WRITING FOR 16 HOURS A DAY, TRYING TO MAKE ENOUGH MONEY TO MARRY A POLISH COUNTESS NAMED EVELINE HANSKA.

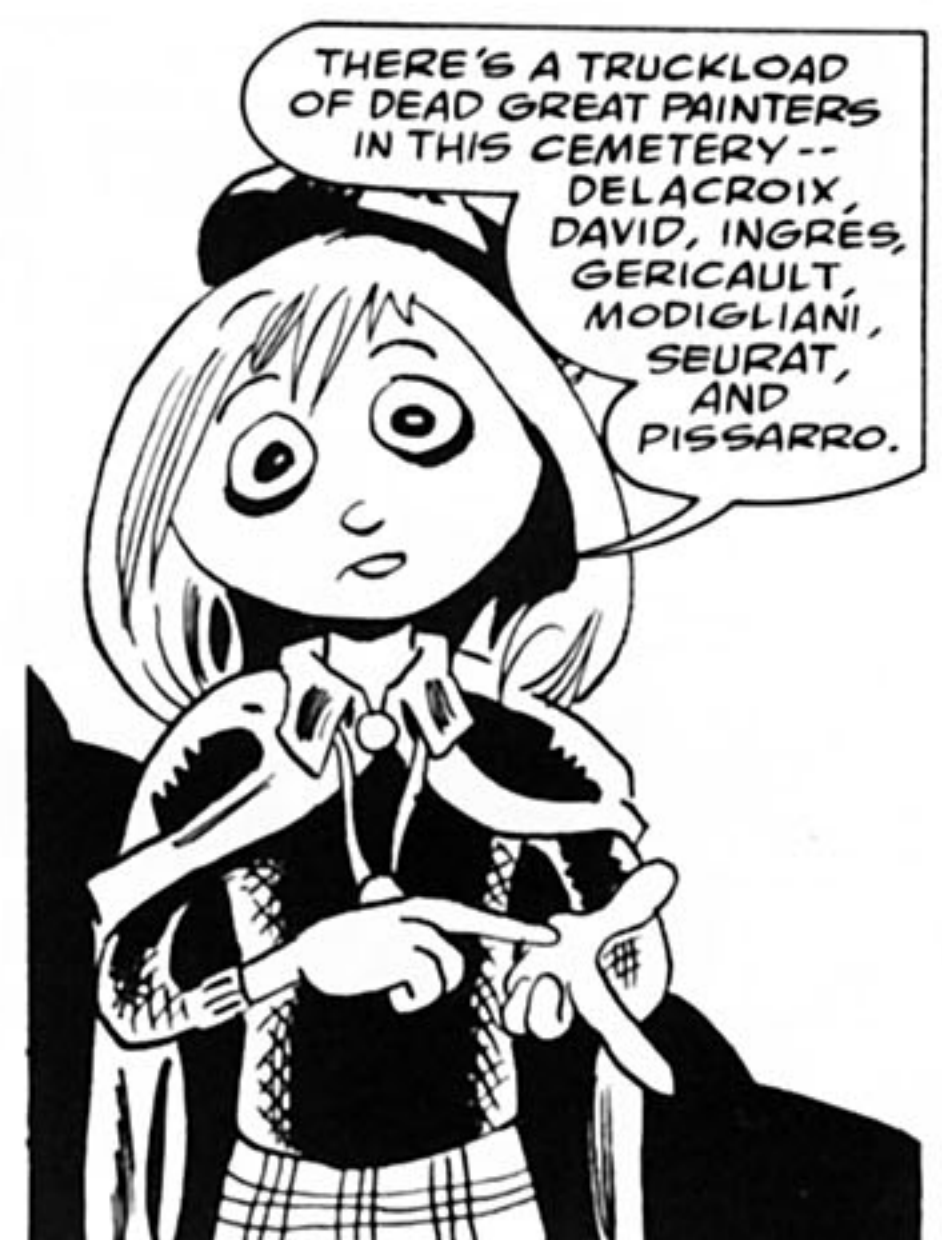


BUT BALZAC MADE LOTS OF REVISIONS AFTER HIS BOOKS WERE TYPESET, AND EVERY TIME HE CHANGED SOMETHING HE HAD TO PAY THE PRINTERS.

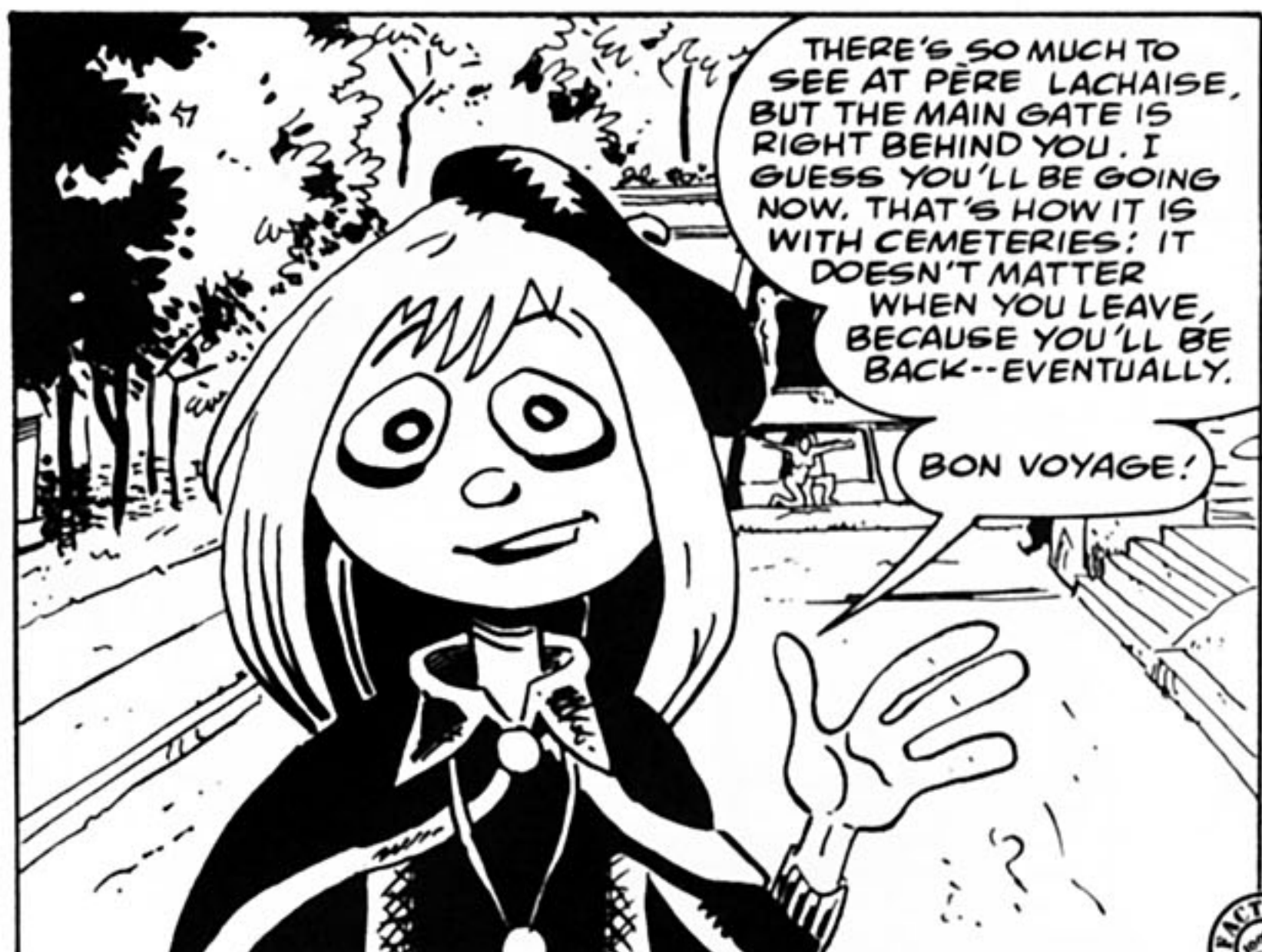
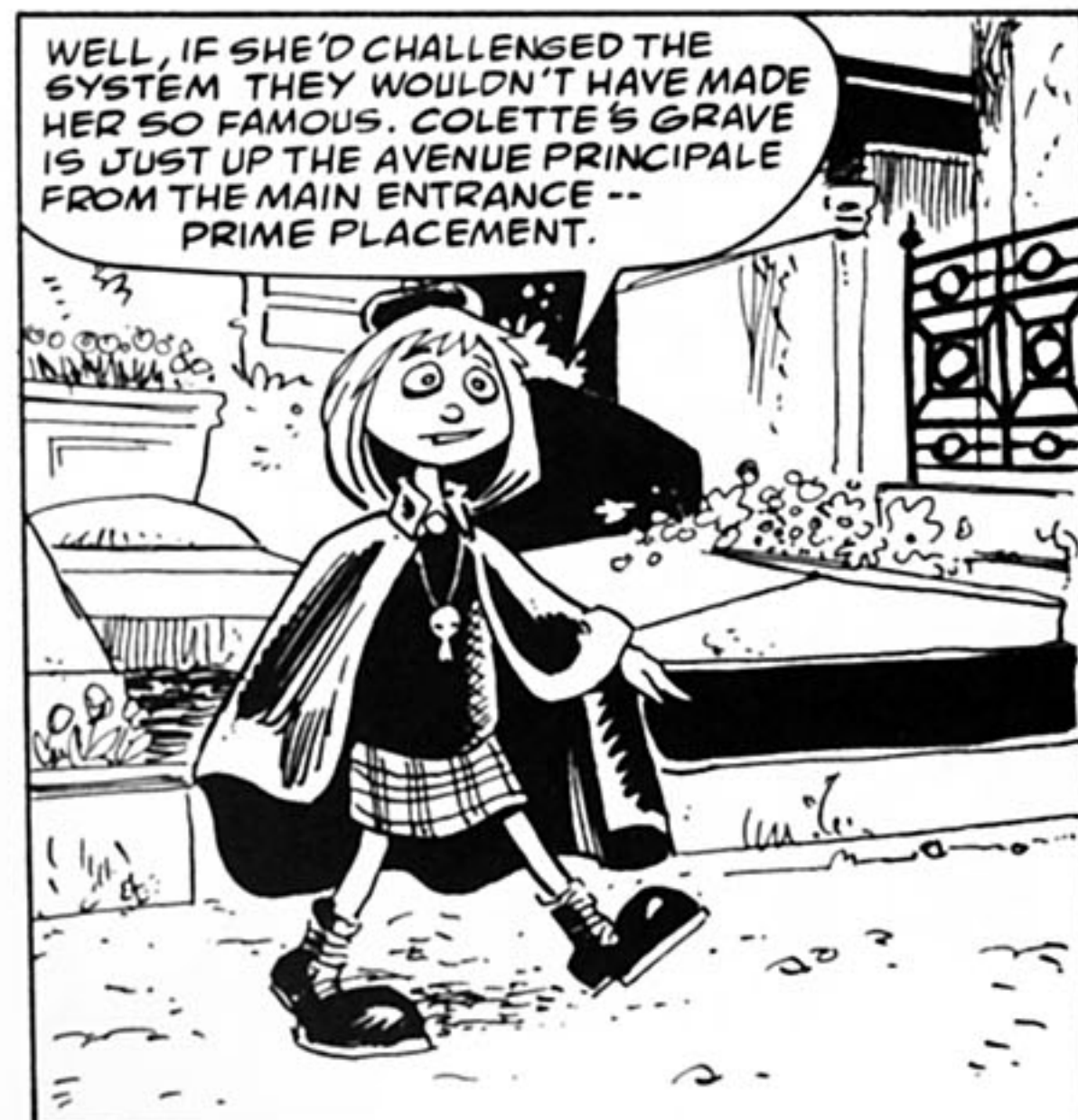
SO THE MORE HE WROTE, THE MORE MONEY HE OWED.

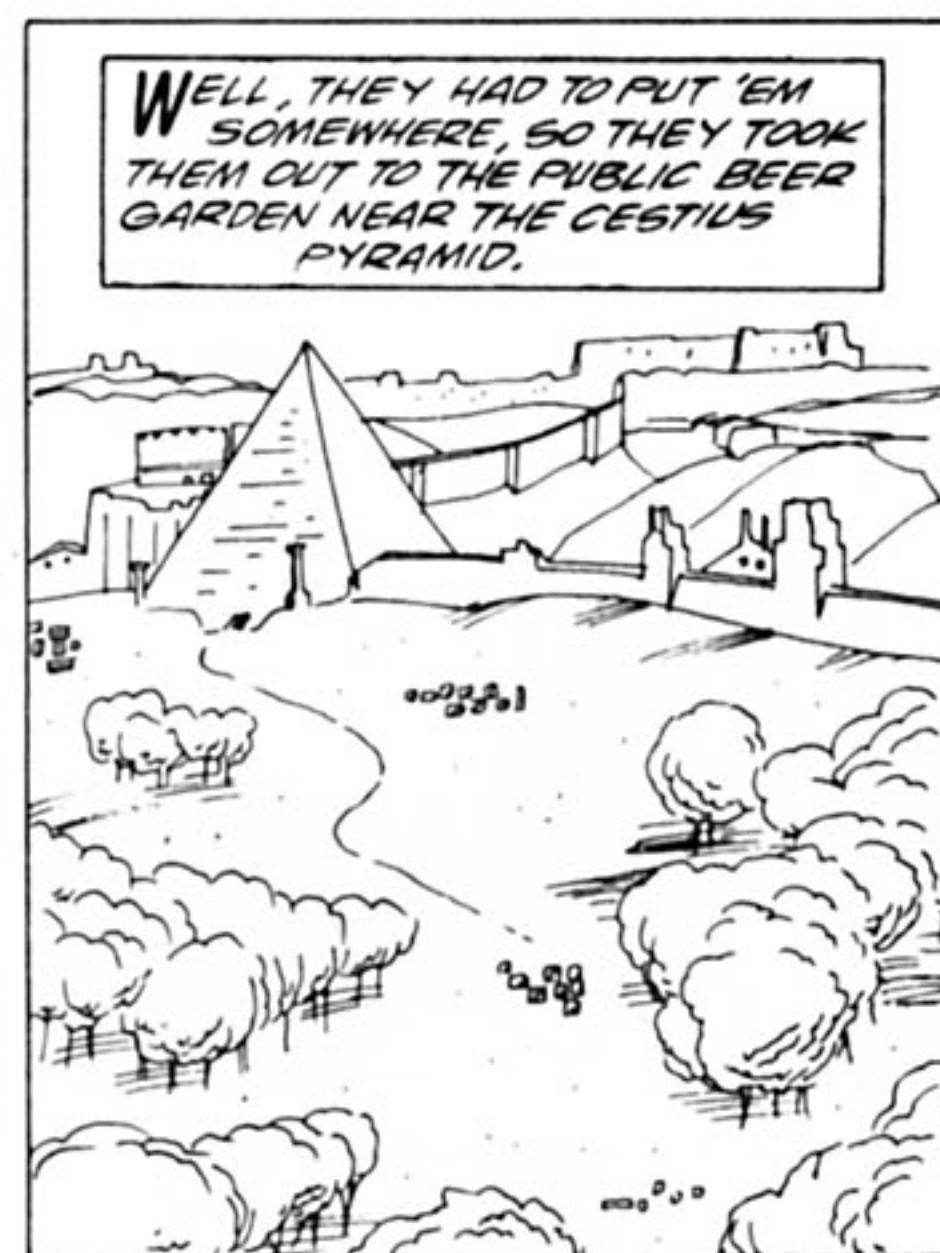
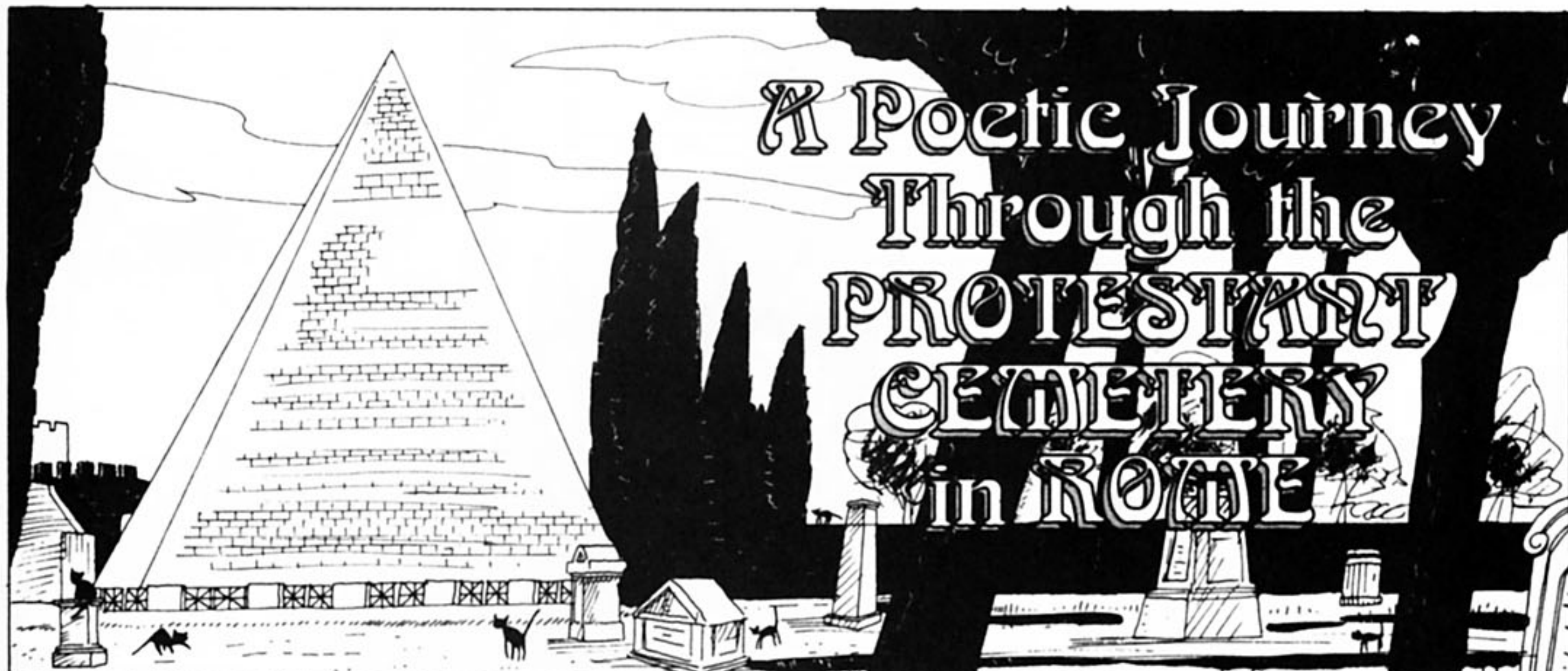


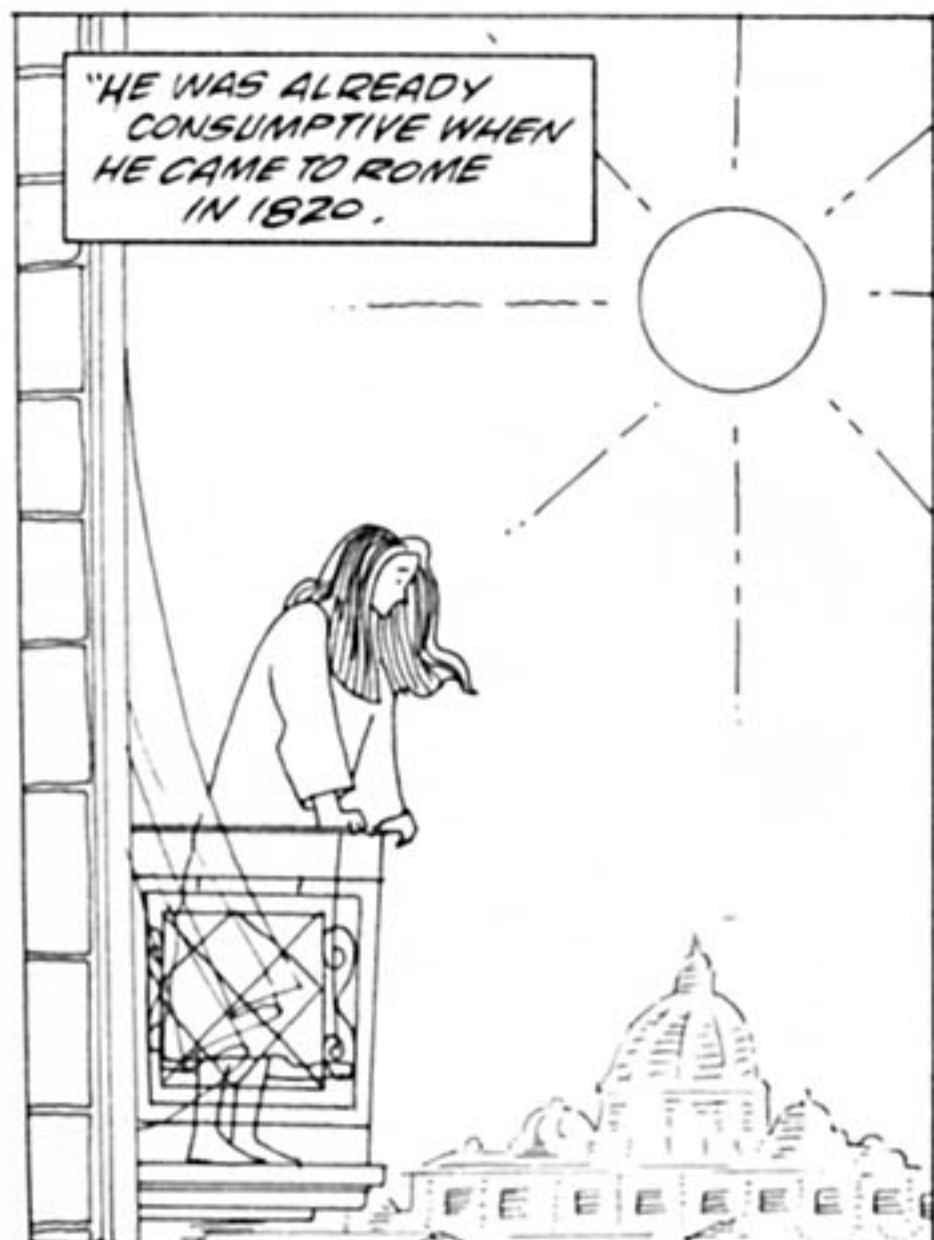
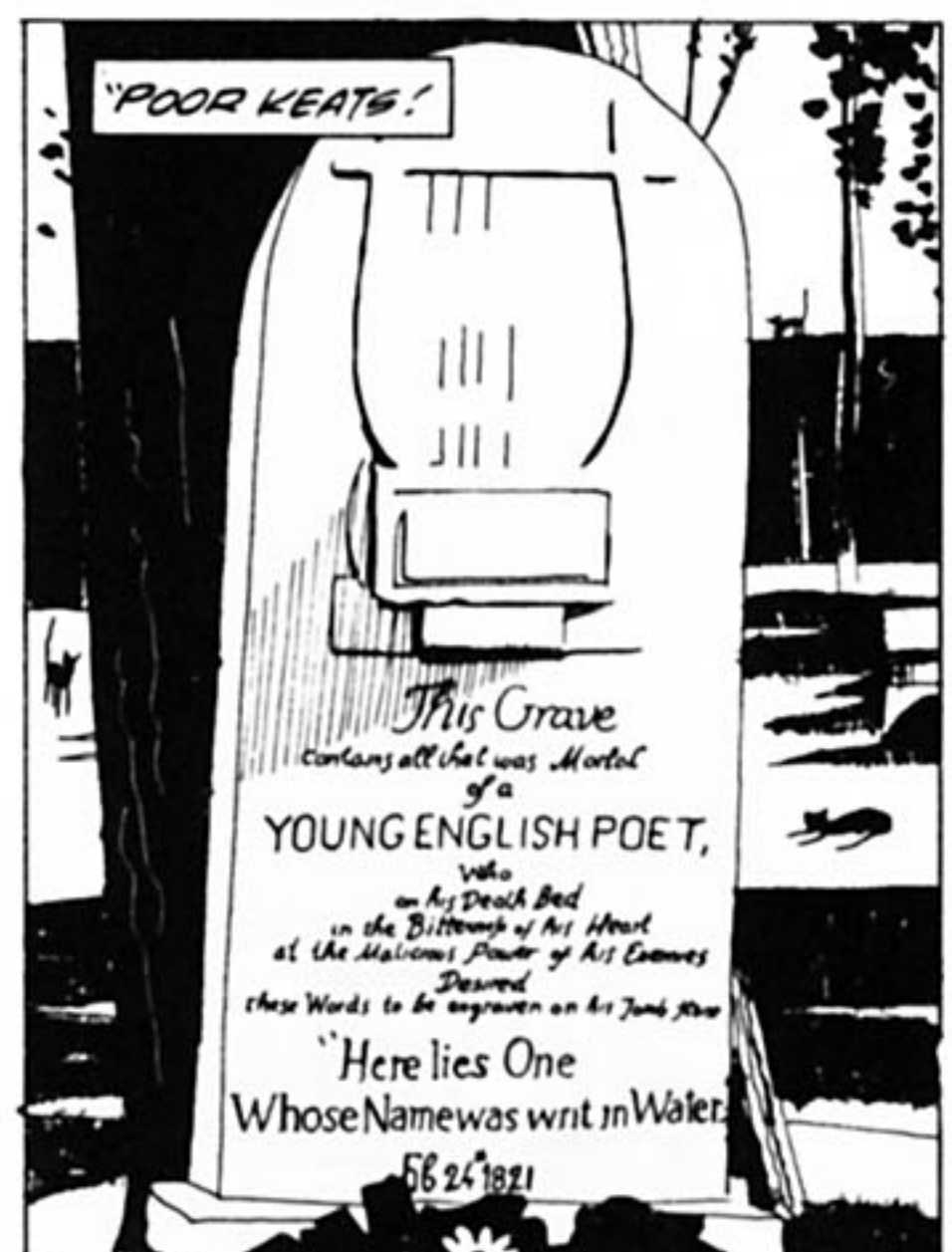
BY THE TIME THE COUNTESS MARRIED HIM, BALZAC HAD WORKED HIMSELF TO DEATH. HE WAS COMPLETELY MISERABLE FOR 5 MONTHS, AND THEN HE DIED.



THERE'S A TRUCKLOAD OF DEAD GREAT PAINTERS IN THIS CEMETERY -- DELACROIX, DAVID, INGRES, GERICAULT, MODIGLIANI, SEURAT, AND PISSARRO.









"WELL, THE PAPAL AUTHORITY WOULDN'T HAVE IT. NO MORE BURIALS IN THE PARTE ANTICA THEY SAID--WHO KNOWS WHY."



"SO MARY DECIDED TO EXHUME WILLIAM AND BURY HIM WITH HIS FATHER IN THE ZONA VECCHIA, THE NEWER SECTION OF THE CEMETERY."



"THE EXHUMATION WAS A HORROR SHOW! THEY FOUND A 5 1/2-FOOT SKELETON IN WILLIAM'S GRAVE--OBVIOUSLY NOT LITTLE WILL SHELLEY!"



"THEY NEVER DID FIND WILLIAM, SO THEY BURIED SHELLEY ALONE AND THEN TRELAWNEY STARTED HAVING SECOND THOUGHTS."

You know, I think I'd like him better over there.



SO, THEY MOVED SHELLEY HERE, WHERE YOU FIND HIM NOW! AS YOU CAN SEE, TRELAWNEY JOINED HIM SOME YEARS LATER-- FAITHFUL FRIEND, TRELAWNEY!

AH!



WE REALLY SHOULD BE GETTING BACK NOW. I'VE BEEN AWAY TOO LONG AS IT IS.



TELL ME, SEVERN, HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU DIED?

OH, GOD! NOT UNTIL I WAS 85!

I BURIED THEM ALL! MY DEAREST KEATS, AND SHELLEY! I ARRANGED THE FUNERALS, THE EXHUMATIONS!



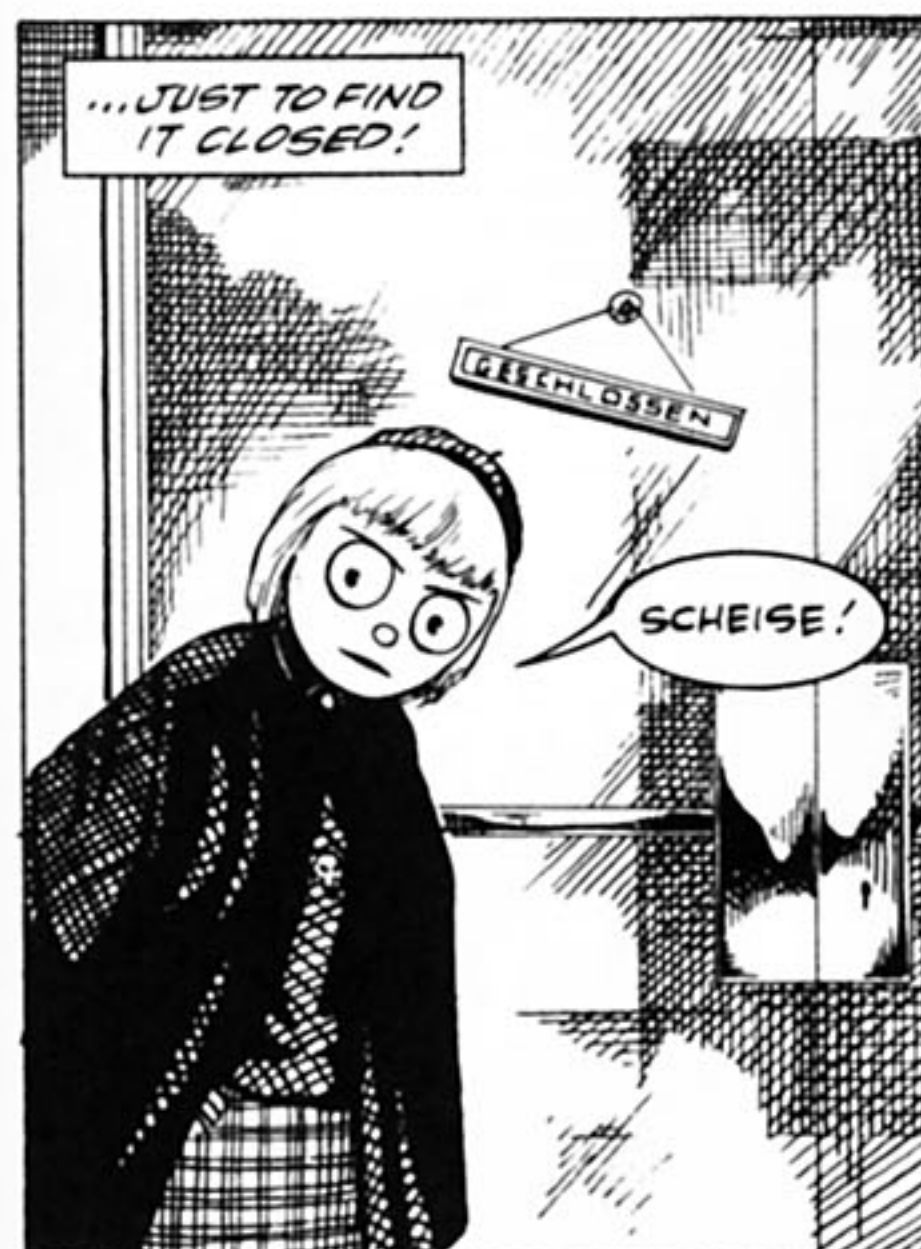
THEY DIED YOUNG, IN THEIR GREATNESS, BUT I ... I WENT ON AND ON AND ON AND ON...

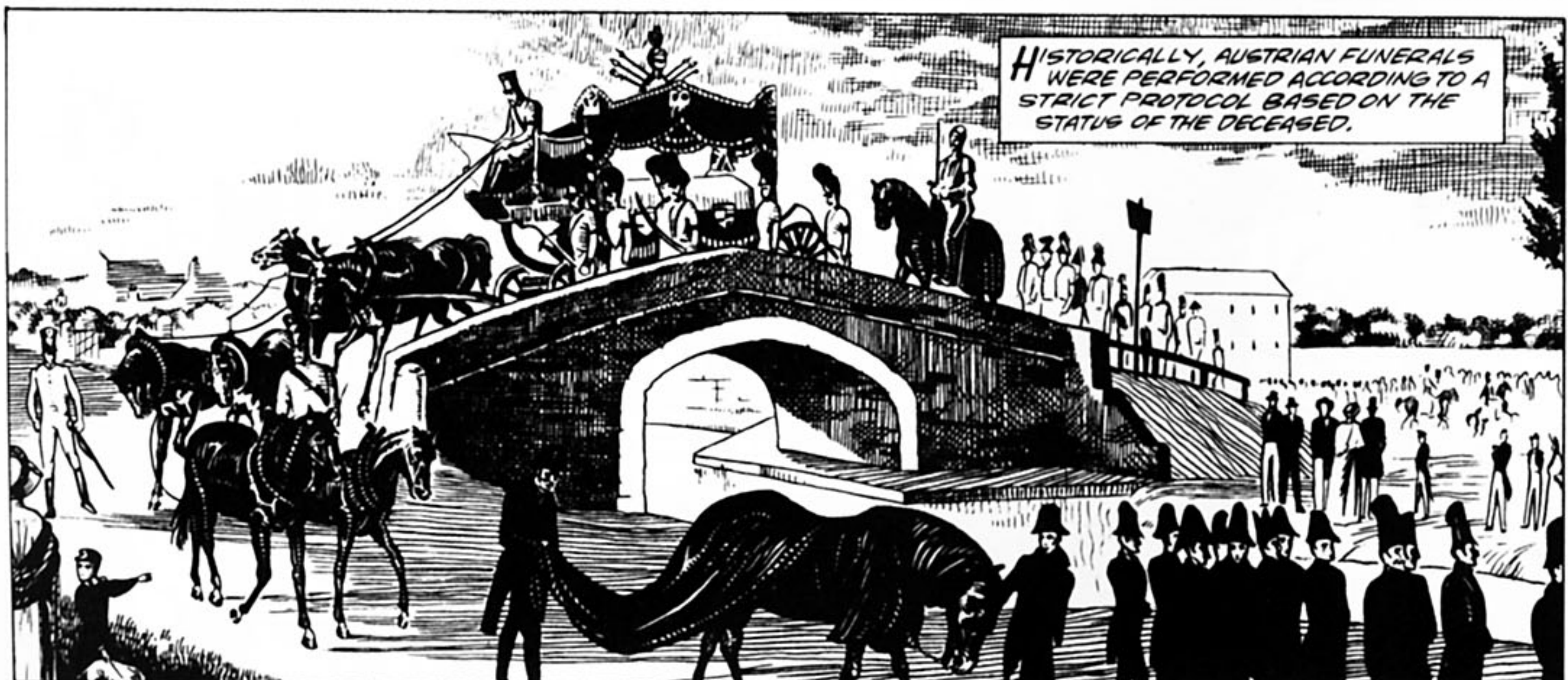


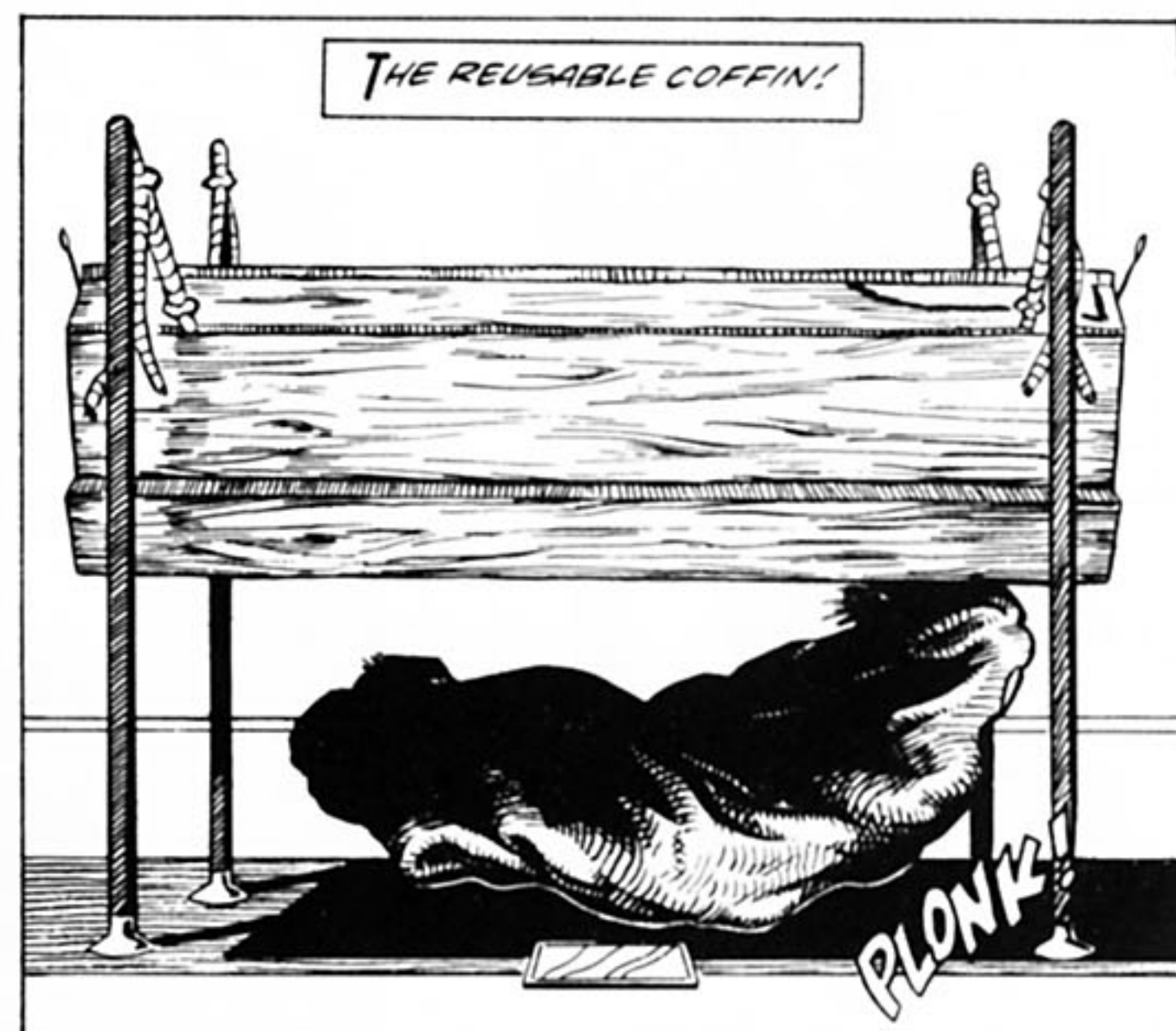
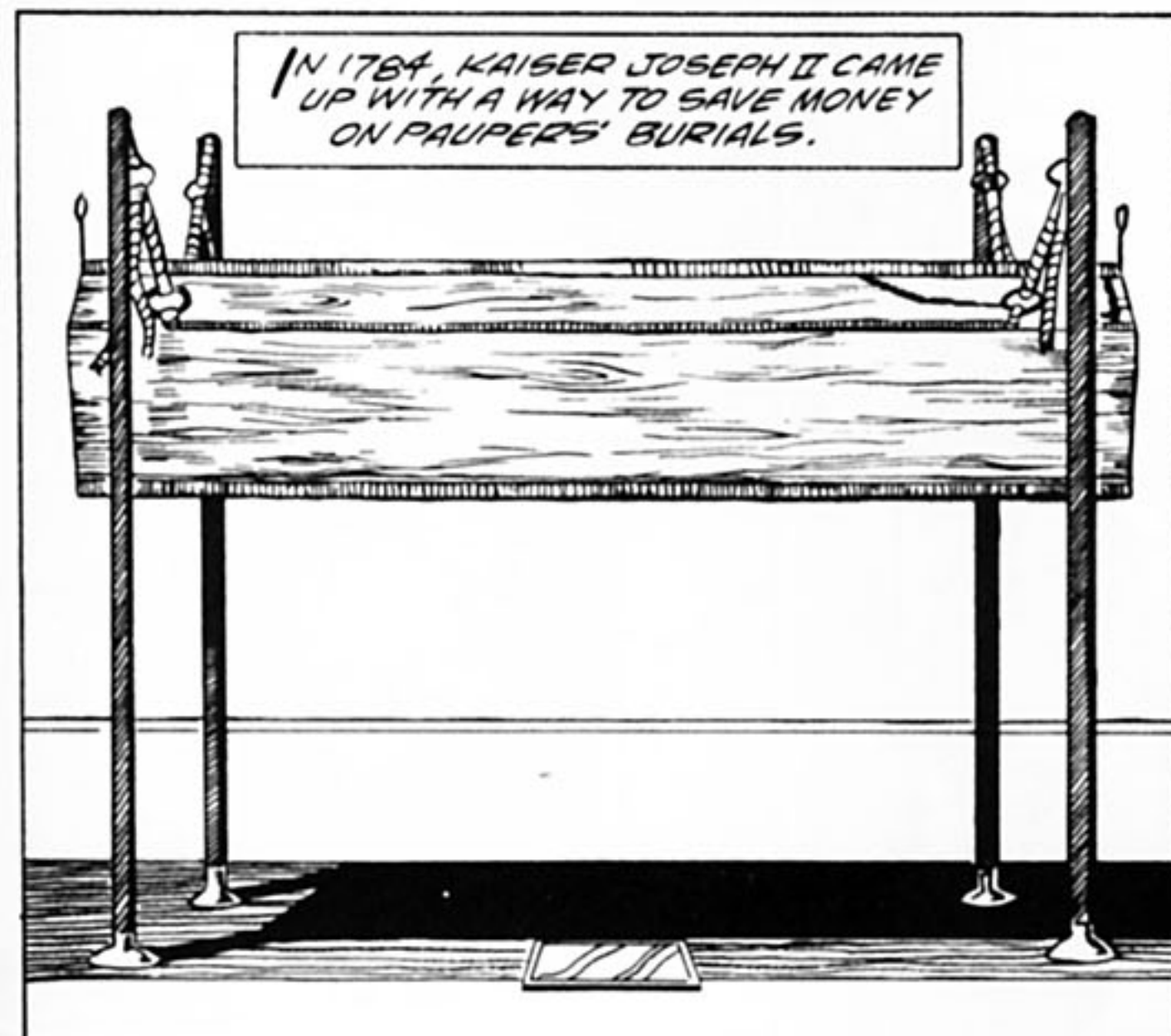
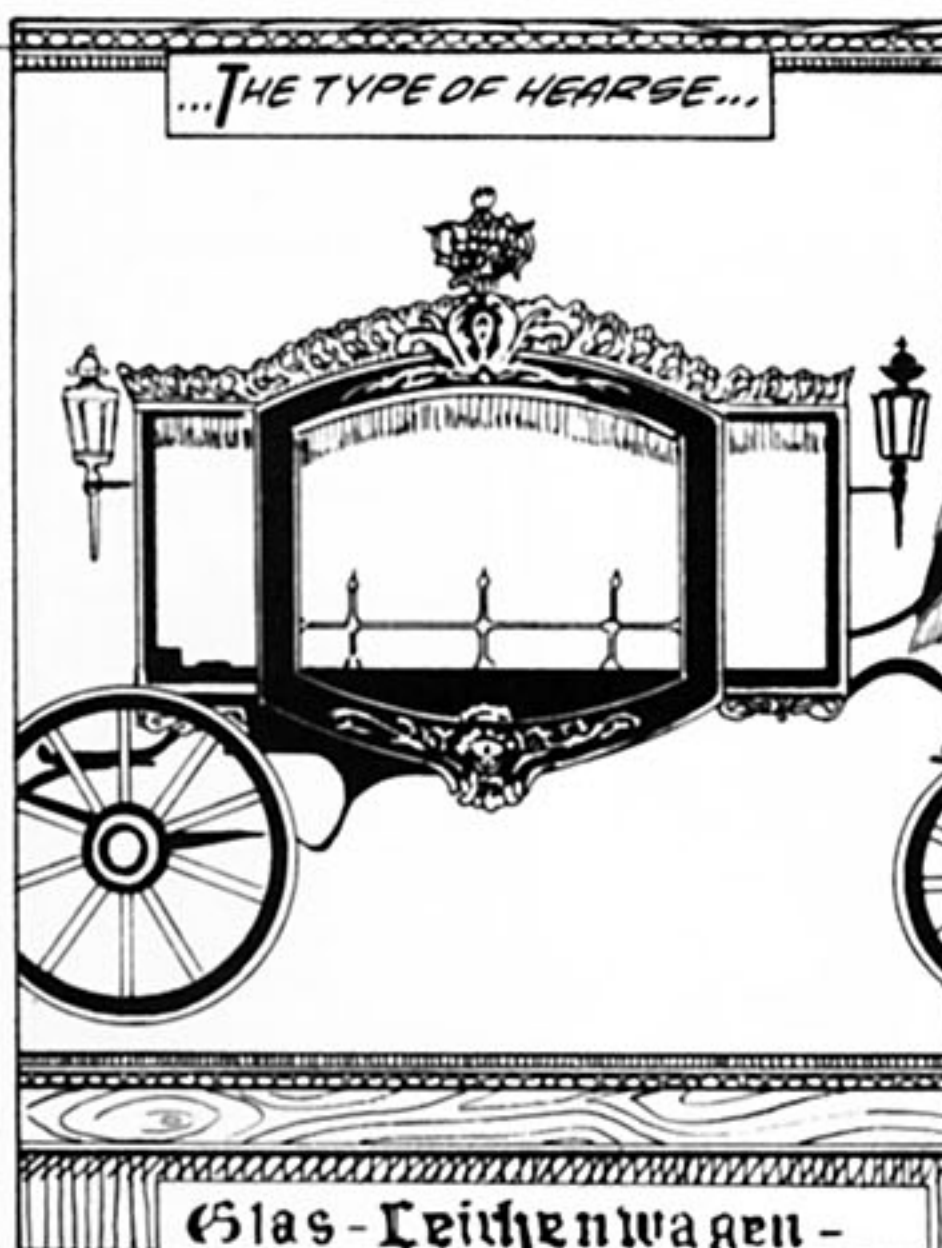
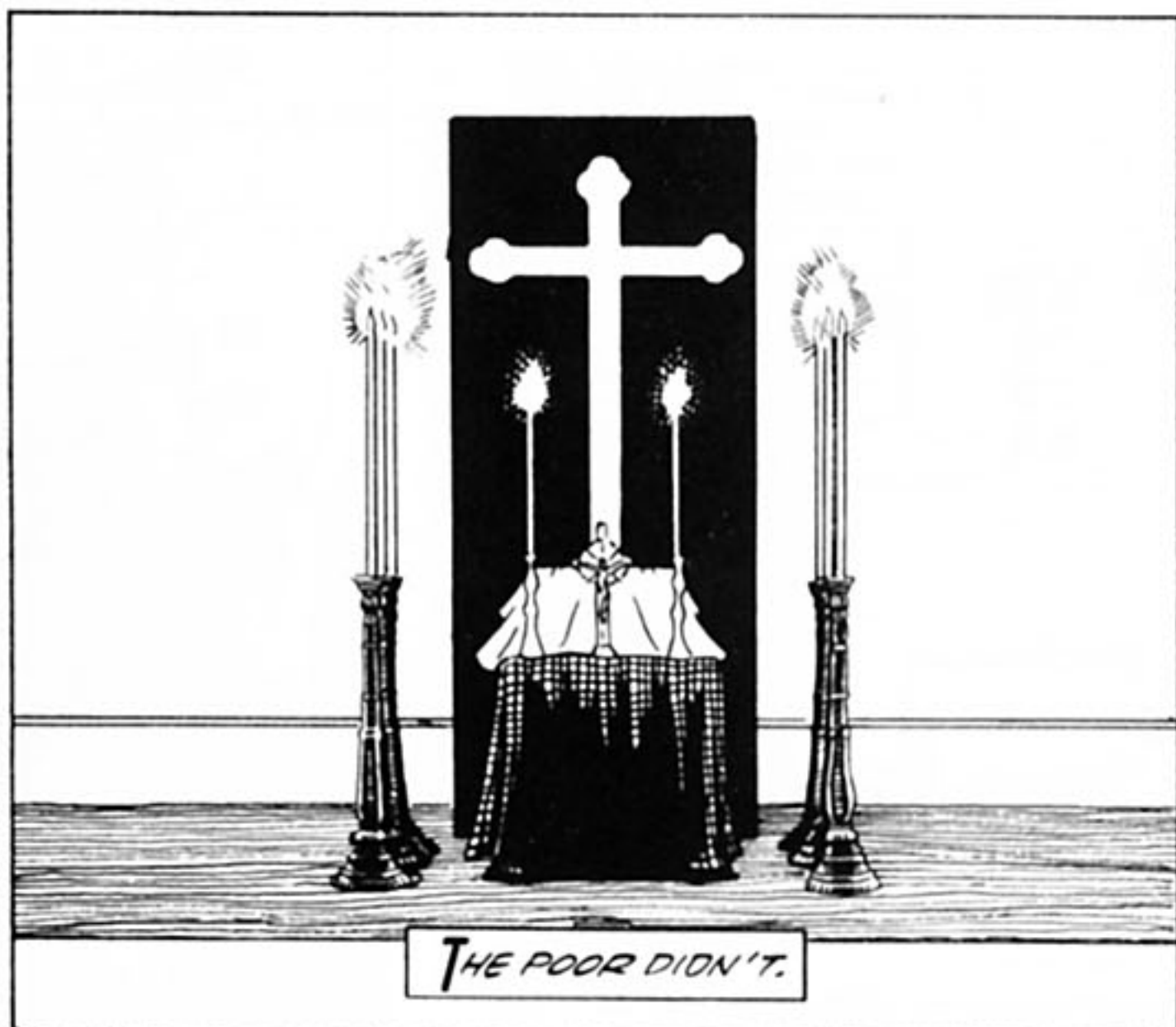
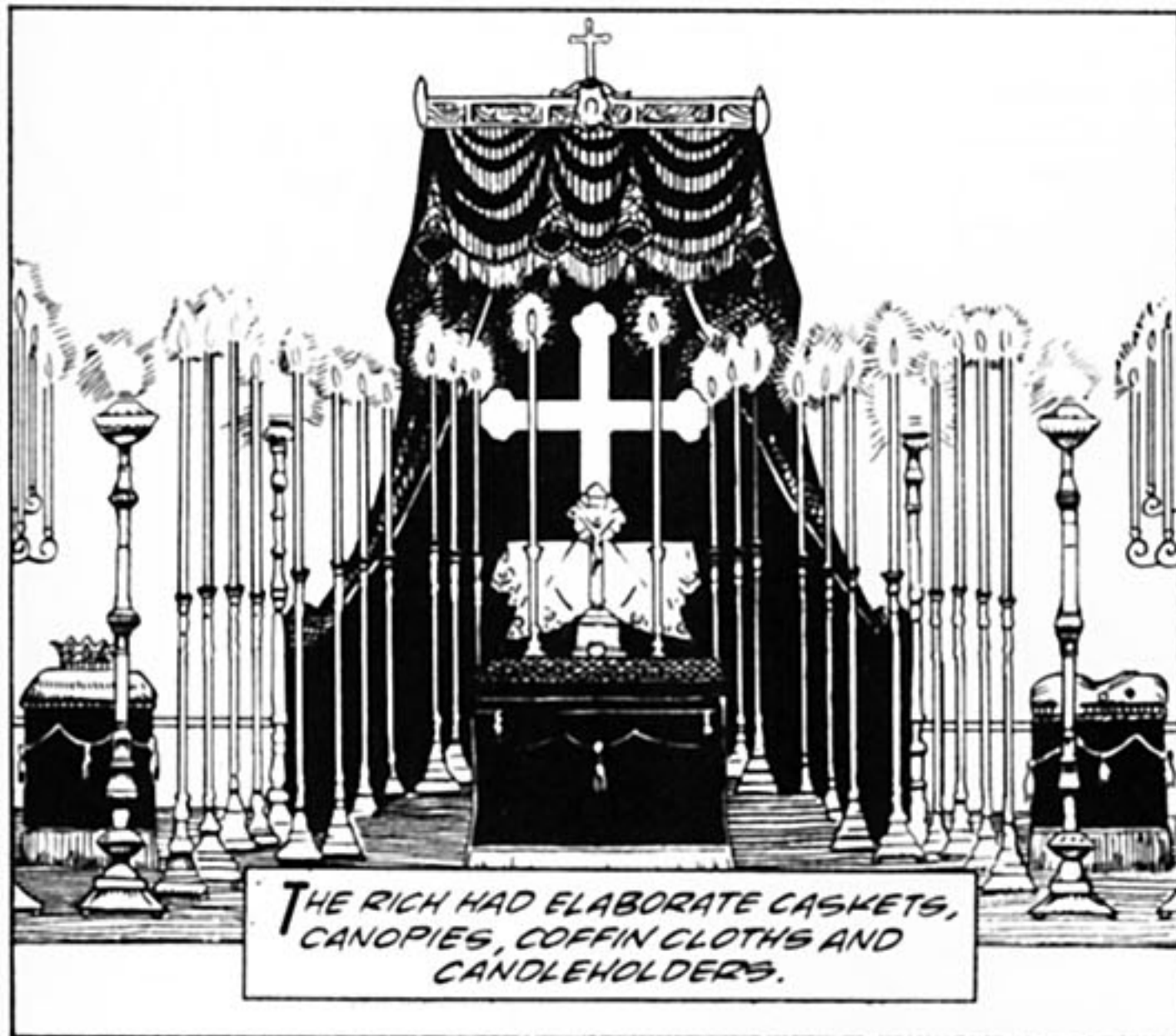
YES, SEVERN, YOU DO GO ON. WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY--ONLY THE GOOD DIE YOUNG!

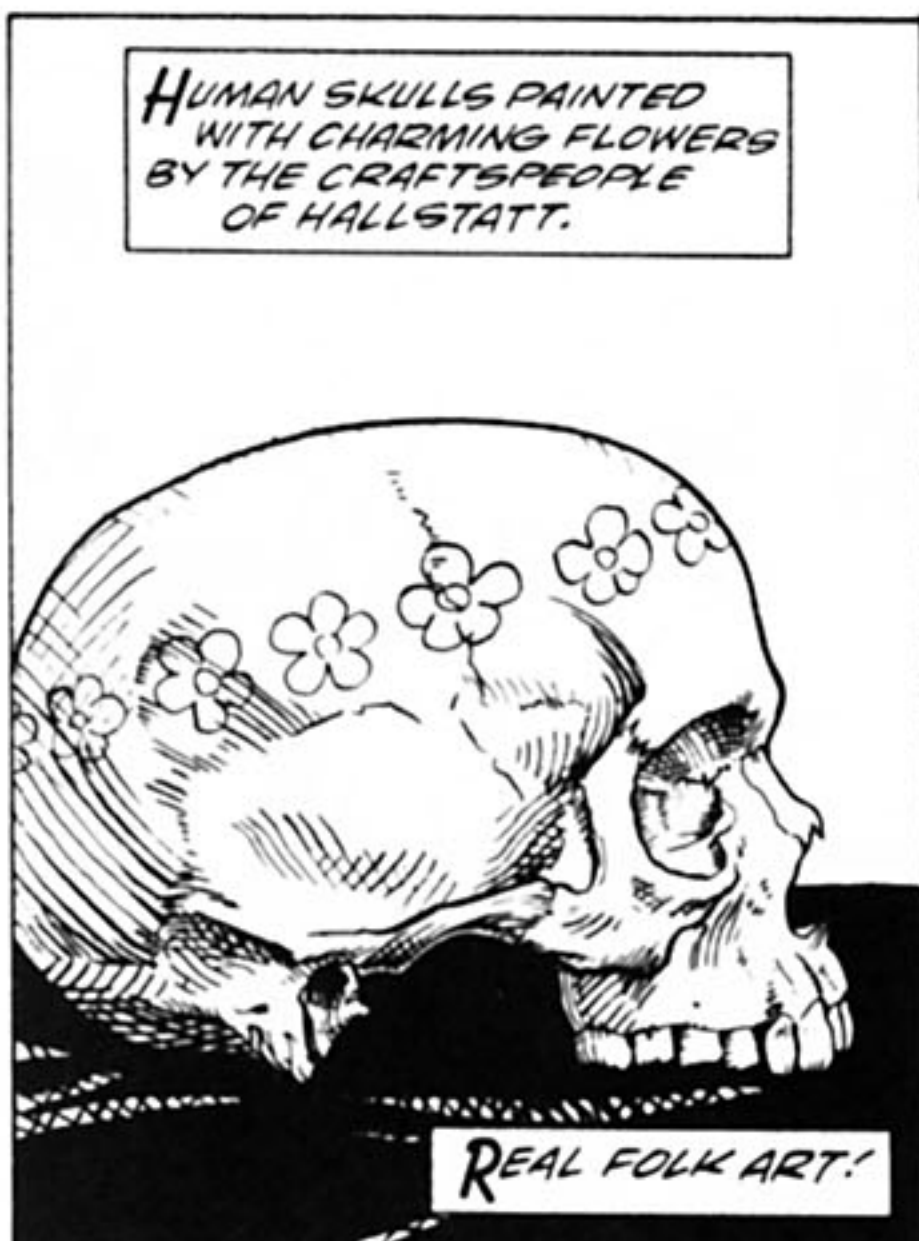


The VIENNA FUNERAL MUSEUM









Greetings
from

GREEN-WOOD CEMETERY

BROOKLYN, NEW YORK,
USA!

ONE OF THE GREATEST
CEMETERIES IN THE WORLD
IS IN BROOKLYN, NEW YORK.
WELCOME TO GREEN-WOOD
CEMETERY!



IN 1838, WHEN GREEN-WOOD
WAS OPENED, MOST PEOPLE
WERE BURIED IN THEIR
LOCAL CHURCHYARD.



A PUBLIC CEMETERY THAT LOOKED
LIKE A PARK WAS A VERY
RADICAL IDEA.

GREEN-WOOD BECAME A TOURIST
ATTRACTION. FOLKS WOULD FERRY
OVER FROM MANHATTAN, BUY A MAP
OF THE CEMETERY'S "SIGHTS," AND
PICNIC IN THE BONE ORCHARD.



THOUSANDS VISITED, BUT FEW
STAYED PERMANENTLY.



THE CEMETERY OWNERS DECIDED
TO PRIME THE PUMP WITH
SOME STARTER CORPSES.

ONE OF THE FIRST
WAS DO-HUM-ME.



KATZ'S DELI

DO-HUM-ME MET COW-HICK-KEE
WHEN THEY BOTH CAME TO NEW
YORK WITH A GROUP OF SAC AND
IOWA INDIANS TO PROTEST WHITE
SETTLERS MOVING ONTO THEIR LANDS.



THEY MARRIED IN PATERSON, NEW JERSEY. THE LOCALS WENT CRAZY WITH DO-HUM-ME-MANIA.



THE NEWLYWEDS WERE SHOWERED WITH PRESENTS... UNTIL DO-HUM-ME CAUGHT COLD AND DIED RIGHT AFTER THE WEDDING.



GREEN-WOOD'S OWNERS DONATED THE TOMBSTONE, BECAUSE THEY FIGURED A CELEBRITY LIKE DO-HUM-ME WOULD ATTRACT MORE PEOPLE TO BE BURIED THERE.

WELL, THEY WERE WRONG. PEOPLE CAME OUT TO GAWK AT THE GRAVE, BUT NOBODY STUCK AROUND; EVEN COW-HICK-KEE WENT BACK TO IOWA.



LATER, THE OWNERS MOVED DE WITT CLINTON'S BODY INTO GREEN-WOOD. THIS WAS A COUP! A DEAD GOVERNOR, AND THE MAN WHO BUILT THE ERIE CANAL! REAL CLASSY!



BUT THE BIG PROBLEM WAS STILL THAT GREEN-WOOD WAS IN BROOKLYN.



CORPSES AND MOURNERS HAD TO COME OVER FROM MANHATTAN BY FERRY. AT BEST, THE TRIP WAS A HASSLE; IN BAD WEATHER IT WAS A DISASTER.



DOZENS OF CORPSES HAD SPONTANEOUS BURIALS AT SEA ON THE WAY TO GREEN-WOOD.



OF COURSE, SOME BODIES WERE ALREADY IN BROOKLYN--LIKE THE 296 VICTIMS OF THE BROOKLYN THEATER FIRE OF DECEMBER 5, 1876.



AT FIRST THE FIREMEN THOUGHT MOST OF THE AUDIENCE HAD ESCAPED, BUT THE NEXT MORNING THEY STARTED FINDING LOTS OF CREMATED REMAINS.



103 OF THE UNIDENTIFIABLE OR INDIGENT VICTIMS WERE BURIED HERE, BENEATH THIS MARKER.



WHEN THE BROOKLYN BRIDGE OPENED IN 1883, PEOPLE IN MANHATTAN COULD FINALLY GET CORPSES OUT TO GREEN-WOOD.



ONCE THEY GOT THE DEAR DEPARTED OUT HERE, THERE WAS PLENTY OF SPACE TO PUT 'EM. GREEN-WOOD TAKES UP 474 ACRES; THAT'S ABOUT 4 TIMES BIGGER THAN PÈRE LACHAISE IN PARIS. PÈRE LACHAISE HAS MORE FAMOUS PEOPLE, THOUGH.



THE "FAMOUS" IN GREEN-WOOD AREN'T EXACTLY BIG NAMES. ILLUSTRATOR NATHANIEL CURRIER IS HERE, AND HIS PARTNER, JAMES IVES, IS NEARBY. GEORGE CATLIN, AND WHISTLER'S FATHER-- PEOPLE LIKE THAT GOT BURIED HERE.



OVER HERE IS INDIA INK BARON CHARLES HIGGINS.

AND EBERHARD FABER, THE PENCIL GUY, IS BACK DOWN THE HILL.



MOSTLY, THE MONUMENTS ARE INTERESTING--

LIKE THE VAN NESS/ PARSONS MAUSOLEUM THAT HAS A PYRAMID WITH JESUS AND A SPHINX AND ZODIAC SIGNS... WHAT THE HECK WERE THEY THINKING? NOBODY KNOWS.



IN THE EARLY DAYS OF GREEN-WOOD, THE "FRENCH LADY'S GRAVE" WAS A BIG HIT WITH THE TOURISTS. THIS IS IT RIGHT HERE, THE GRAVE OF CHARLOTTE CANDA.



ON THE WAY HOME FROM HER SEVENTEENTH BIRTHDAY PARTY, CHARLOTTE WAS THROWN FROM HER CARRIAGE, HIT HER HEAD ON A CURB, AND DIED.



THE DESIGN OF CHARLOTTE'S TOMB IS BASED ON THE NUMBER 17. PRETTY WEIRD, HUH?



CHARLOTTE'S FIANCE KILLED HIMSELF IN DESPAIR. BEING A SUICIDE, HE COULDN'T BE BURIED IN CONSECRATED GROUND.

SO THEY PUT HIM OVER HERE.



HERE'S CLARENCE MCKENZIE, AN ARMY DRUMMER BOY. HE WAS 12 WHEN HE BECAME THE FIRST CIVIL WAR CASUALTY FROM BROOKLYN.



THERE ARE AN AWFUL LOT OF DEAD BRIDES IN GREEN-WOOD, AND HERE'S ONE--THE MERELLO/VOLTA MONUMENT.



THE STORY IS THAT SHE WAS A BRIDE WHO WAS RELATED TO SOME GANGSTER AND WAS SHOT FOR REVENGE.



BUT NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHO THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE...

...AND IT'S KIND OF HARD TO GET POIGNANT ABOUT SOME BABE WHO'S 8 FEET TALL.



I LIKE THIS WACKY TURKISH MAUSOLEUM.

THIS IS FOR COMMODORE C.K. GARRISON, WHO OWNED A STEAMSHIP LINE IN THE 1880'S.



BY COMPARISON, WILLIAM NIBLO'S MAUSOLEUM IS PRETTY NORMAL-LOOKING; IT WAS WILLIAM NIBLO WHO WAS CRACKED.



WHILE HE WAS ALIVE, NIBLO ENTERTAINED ON THE LAWN HERE. IT'S BEEN A LOT QUIETER SINCE HE DIED.



LOLA MONTEZ DIED IN 1861. SHE WAS A SPANISH DANCER, THE BELLE OF EUROPE, THE MISTRESS OF FRANZ LISZT AND ALEXANDER DUMAS.

KING LOUIS I OF BATAVIA MADE HER COUNTESS OF LANDSFELD, IN APPRECIATION OF HER... SERVICES.



BUT THE COUNTESS WAS ACTUALLY AN ARMY BRAT BORN IN IRELAND, NAMED ELIZA GILBERT.



THE FAMILY MOVED TO INDIA WHEN ELIZA GILBERT'S DAD WAS STATIONED THERE.

WHEN HER DAD DIED, ELIZA'S MOM TRIED TO MARRY HER OFF TO SOME INDIAN;



ELIZA RAN OFF WITH A SOLDIER INSTEAD. SHE WAS 14.



AFTER HE DITCHED HER, SHE MADE HER WAY TO SPAIN AND LEARNED TO DANCE.

LITTLE ELIZA GILBERT BECAME THE FABULOUS LOLA MONTEZ!



AFTER KING LOUIS' SON KICKED HER OUT OF BATAVIA, THINGS WENT DOWNHILL. SHE TRAVELLED A LOT, AND ENDED UP DANCING IN STAG SHOWS IN NEW YORK.

THE COUNTESS OF LANDSFELD DIED IN A CHEAP BOARDING HOUSE IN ASTORIA, QUEENS.



THIS POOR LITTLE STONE IS ALL THAT'S LEFT OF HER-- BUT WHAT A LIFE SHE HAD!



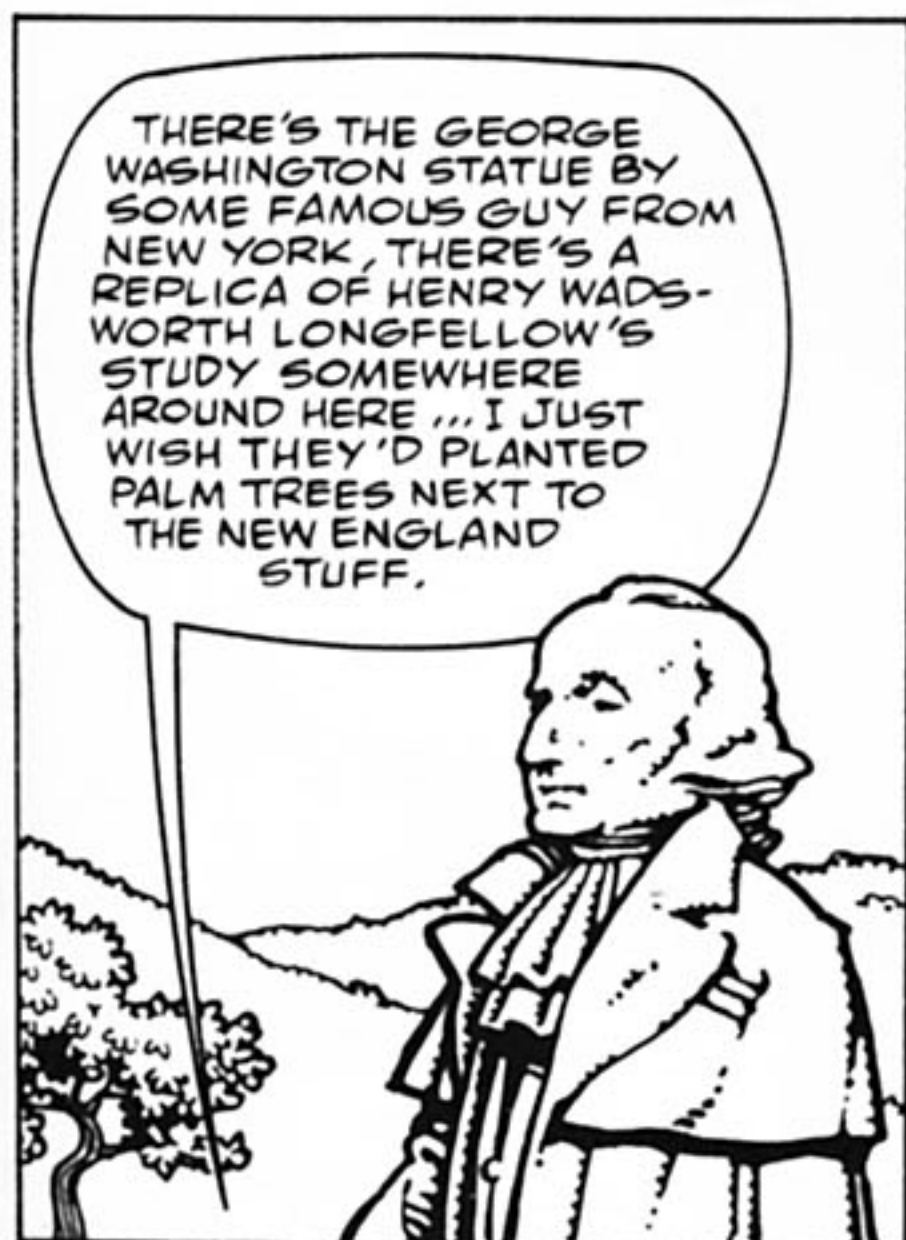
HERE'S THE GRAVE OF ANOTHER SCANDALOUS CHARACTER-- BOSS TWEED.

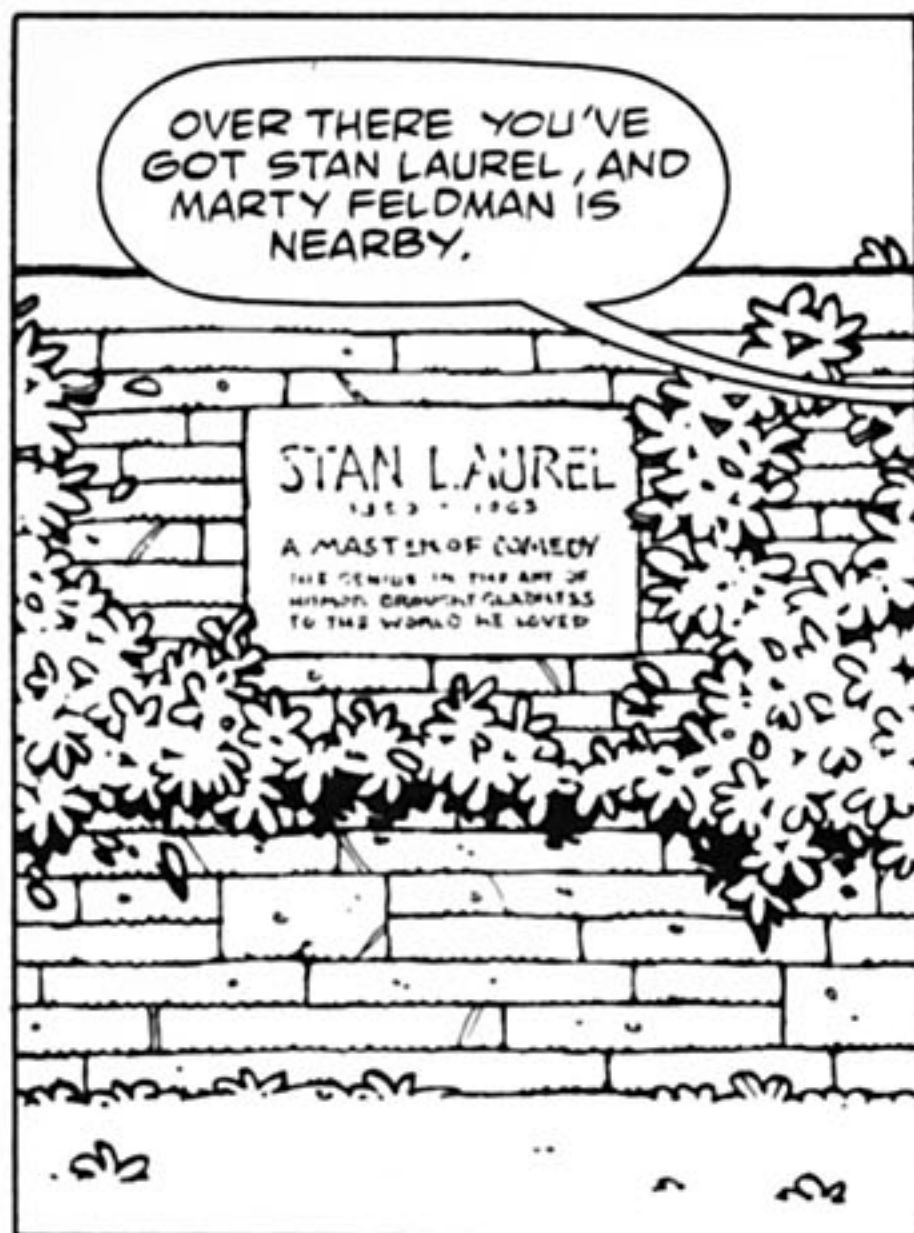
WILLIAM "BOSS" TWEED OF TAMMANY HALL PROBABLY STOLE MORE PUBLIC MONEY THAN ANY OTHER NEW YORK POLITICIAN EVER--

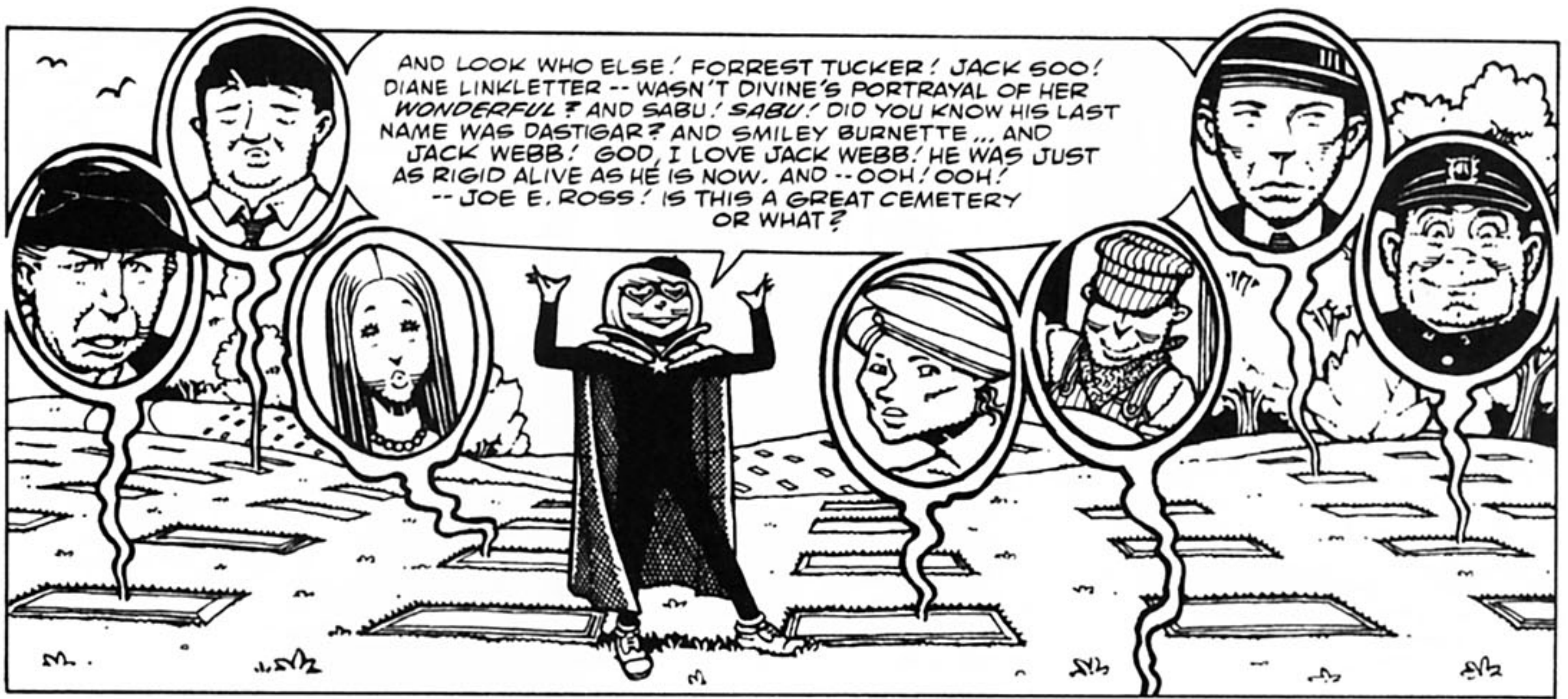


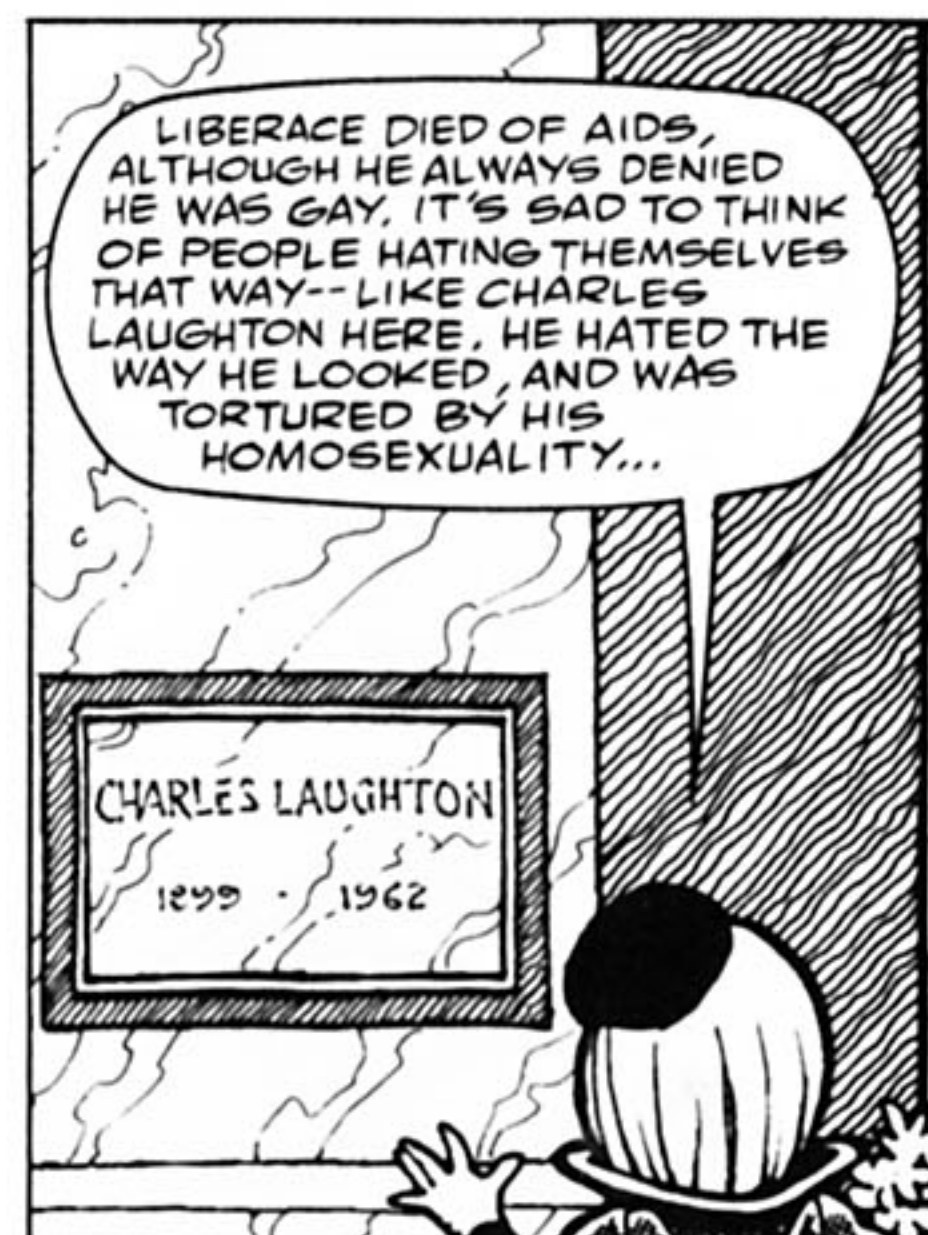
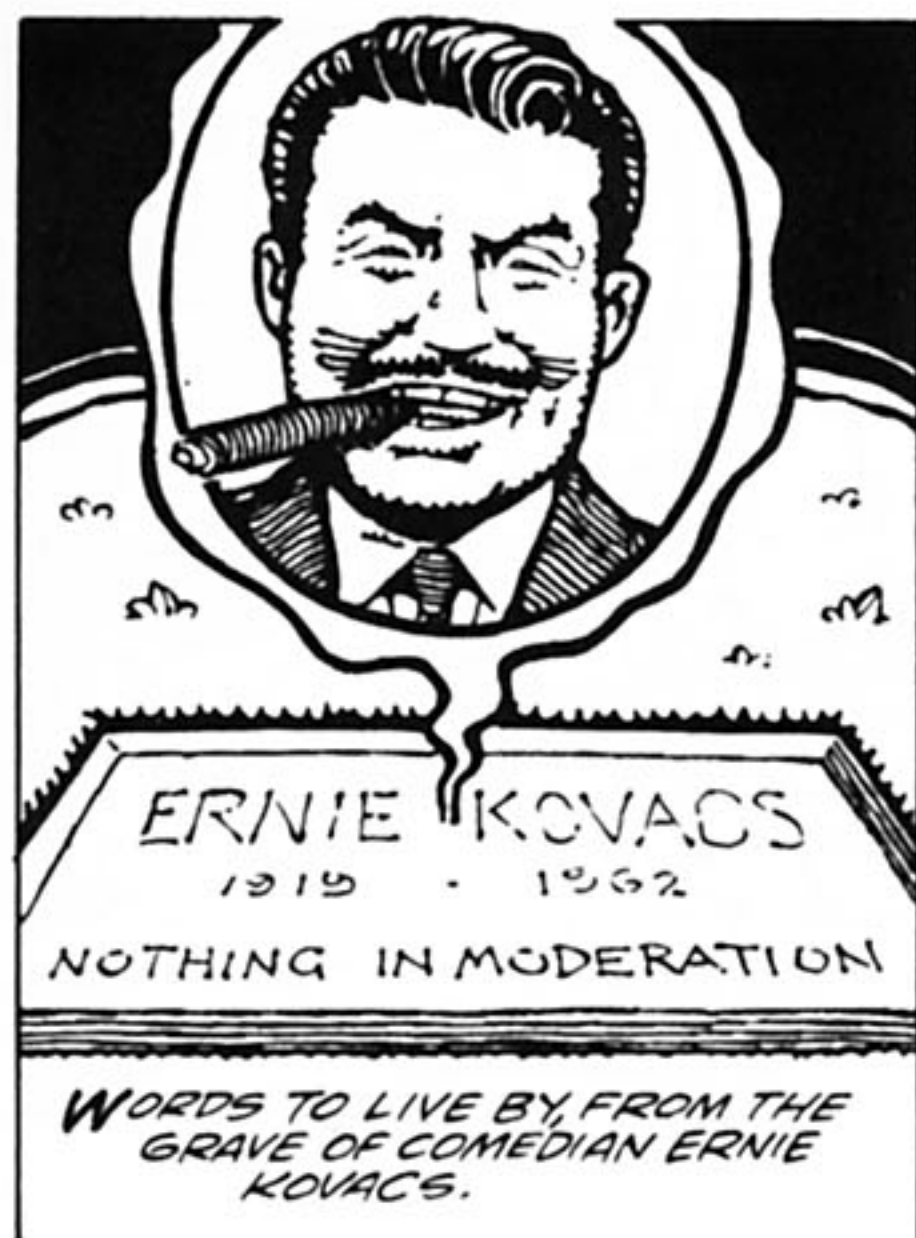
A REAL ACHIEVEMENT, CONSIDERING THE COMPETITION HE'S HAD.

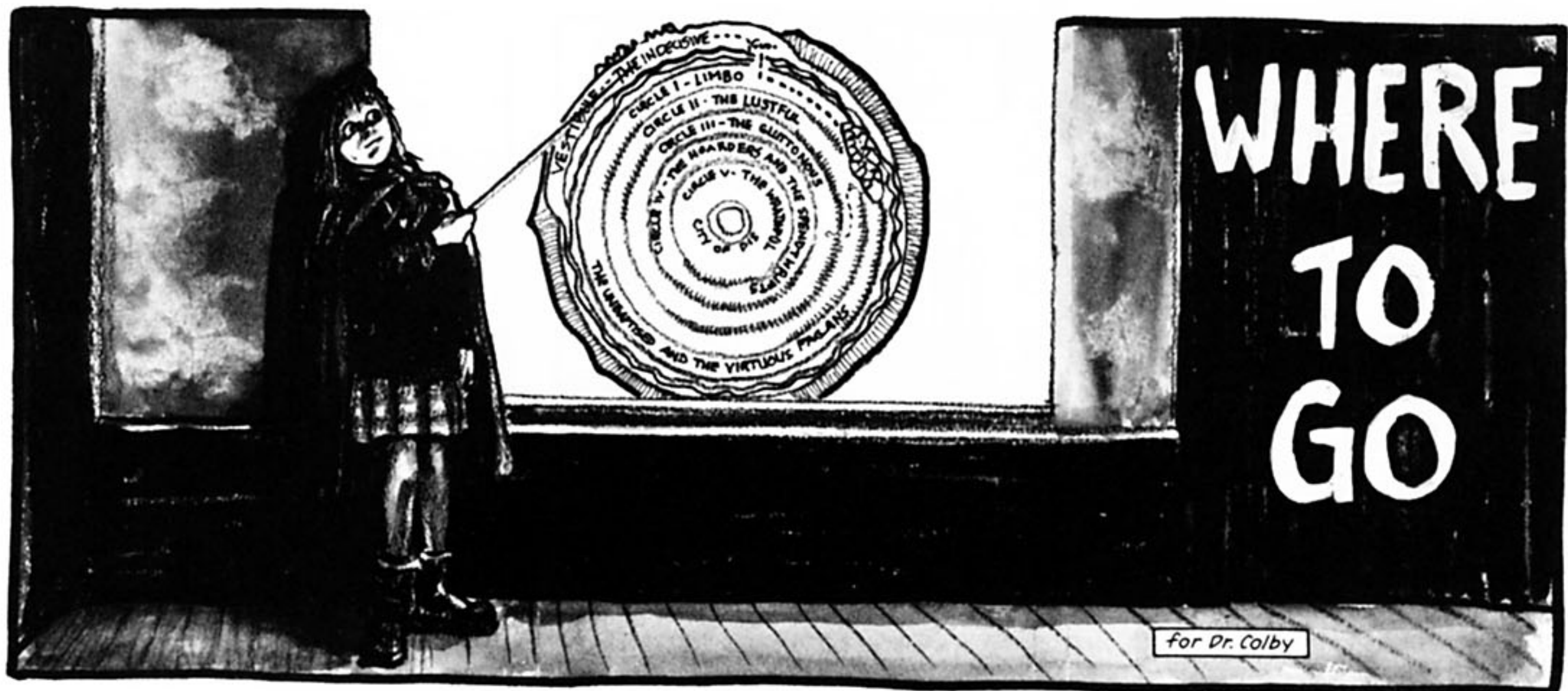


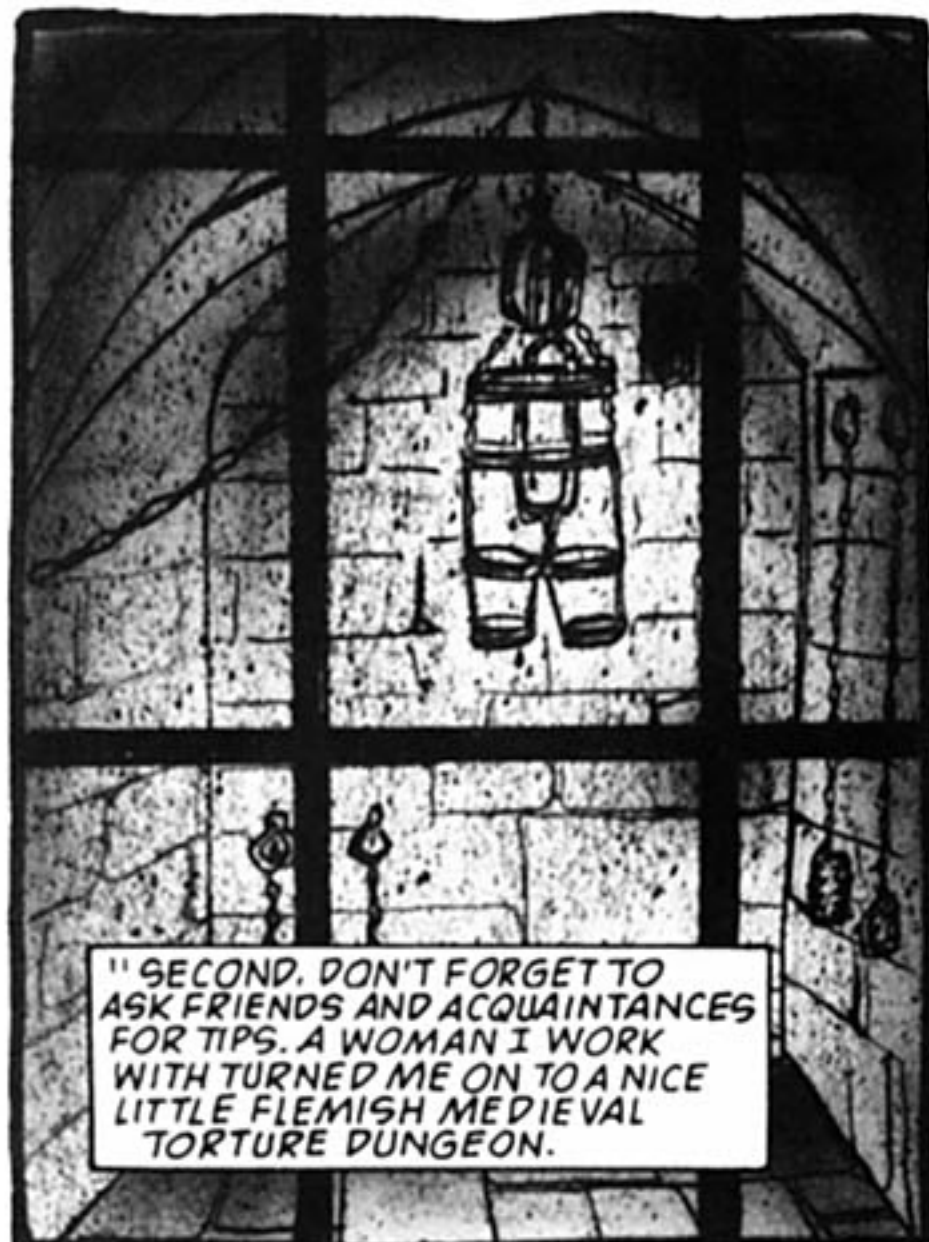




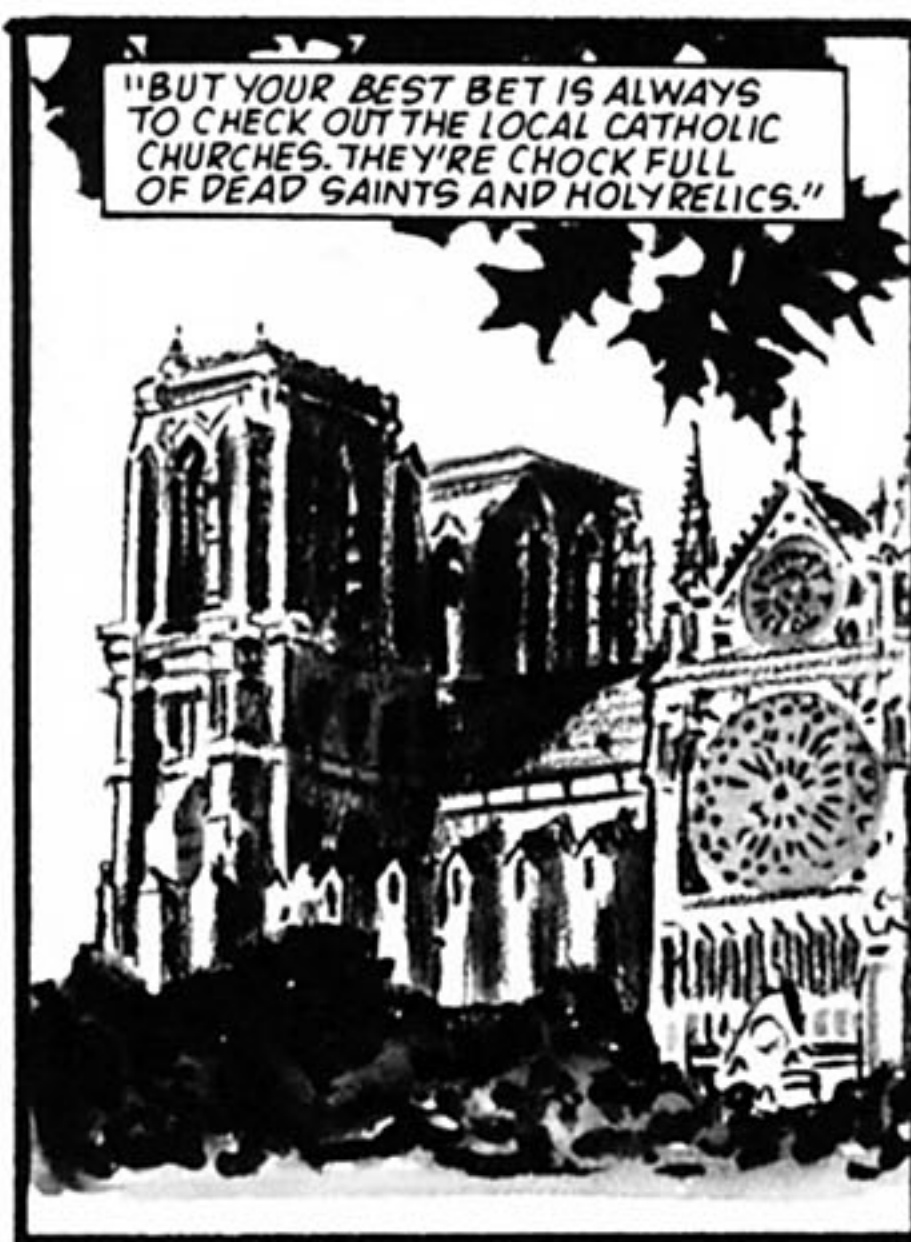








"SECOND, DON'T FORGET TO ASK FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES FOR TIPS. A WOMAN I WORK WITH TURNED ME ON TO A NICE LITTLE FLEMISH MEDIEVAL TORTURE DUNGEON."



"BUT YOUR BEST BET IS ALWAYS TO CHECK OUT THE LOCAL CATHOLIC CHURCHES. THEY'RE CHOCK FULL OF DEAD SAINTS AND HOLY RELICS."

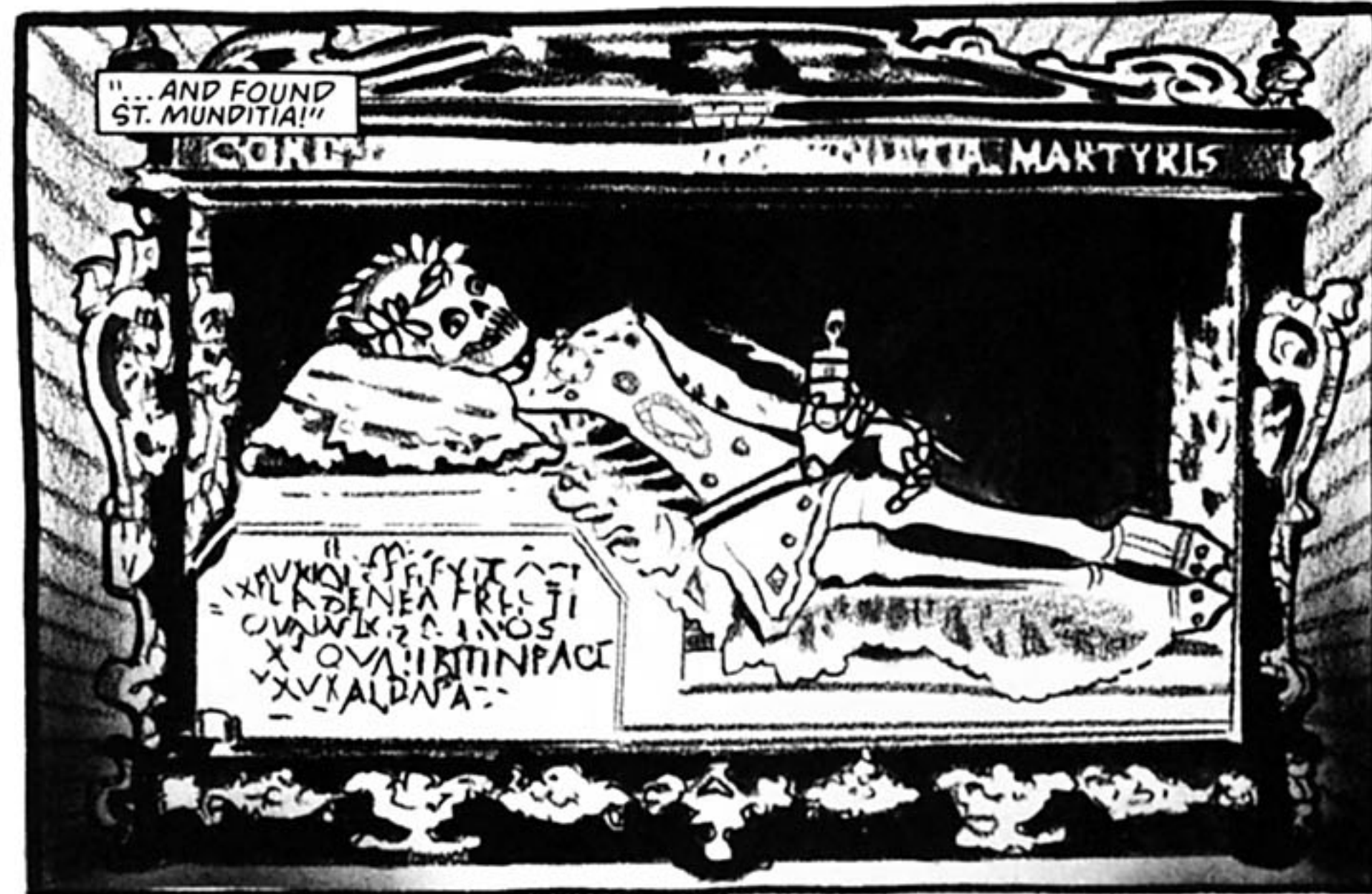


FOR INSTANCE, IN ROME THERE'S THE CATACOMBS BENEATH THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA DELLA CONCEZIONE. THE DECORATIONS ARE MADE OUT OF HUMAN BONES.

COOL HUH?



WHEN I WAS IN MUNICH, I HAPPENED TO WANDER INTO THE PETERSKIRCHE...



"...AND FOUND ST. MUNDITIA!"

XLADENEA FRE TI
OVIWIK 2 1 NOS
X OVA: BTINPAC
XXVIALDPA



ISN'T SHE PERFECT? THE CHURCH SAYS SHE'S THE PATRON SAINT OF LONELY WOMEN!



PUT SOME MONEY IN THE COLLECTION BOX AND HELP YOURSELF TO PICTURES OF THE DEAD SAINT.



YOU CAN SEND THEM AS POSTCARDS TO ALL YOUR SINGLE GIRL FRIENDS BACK HOME.

HAPPY TRAILS!

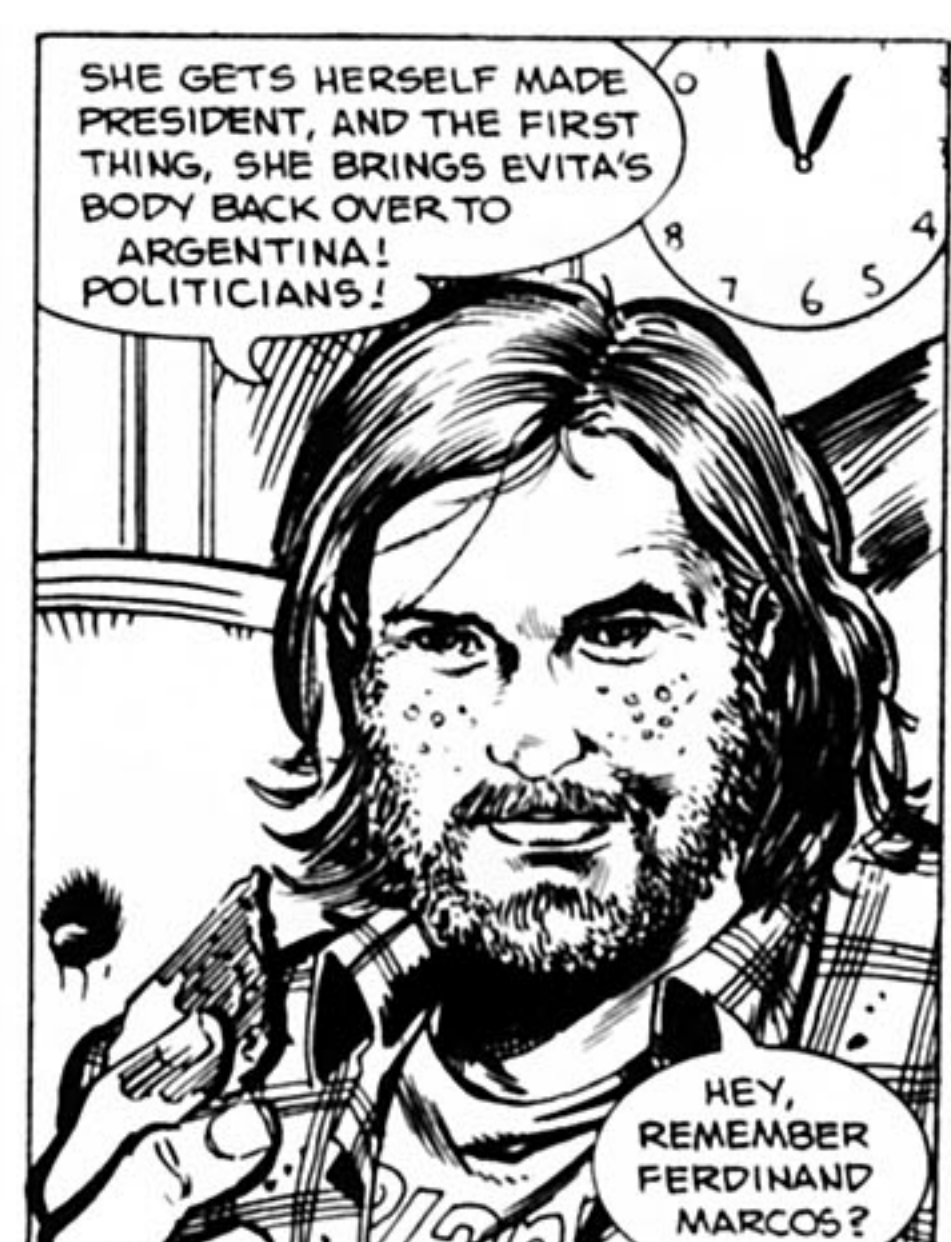
CHAPTER SEVEN

NO REST FOR THE WEARY

ALTERNATIVE DISPOSAL

Are you tired of getting rid of corpses in the same old way? Does burial seem humdrum? Has the spark gone out of cremation? Here are dozens of new uses for old bodies. Obviously, you can cut them up and reuse some of the parts (*page 165*), but did you know that you can also decorate with them (*page 160*), eat them (*page 173*), or even *date* them (*page 177*)? Consider this chapter a “do-it-yourself” guide to adding a little death to your life.





"PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES, MARRIED TO IMELDA, THAT WOMAN WITH ALL THE SHOES? HE GETS KICKED OUT, GOES INTO EXILE IN HAWAII."



"SO THEN HE DIES AND THE NEW PRESIDENT, CORAZON AQUINO, WON'T LET THE BODY BE BURIED IN THE PHILIPPINES."



"SO MRS. MARCOS SAYS FINE, SHE'S NOT BURYING FERDINAND UNTIL SHE CAN BURY HIM BACK HOME."



"SHE KEEPS MARCOS' BODY ON ICE FOR FOUR YEARS AND WHEELS HIM OUT FOR PARTIES EVERY YEAR ON HIS BIRTHDAY!"



"AND WHEN FERDY'S MOM DIED IN THE PHILIPPINES, THEY DECIDED NOT TO BURY HER EITHER UNTIL FERDY WAS BROUGHT BACK! THERE WERE ALL THESE DEAD MARCOSSES LYING AROUND ALL OVER THE WORLD!"



GOSH, DON, THAT'S REALLY INTERESTING, BUT IT'S GETTING LATE...

NO PROBLEM, MAN, I KNOW A LOT OF THESE STORIES.



"LIKE THE ONE ABOUT MRS. VAN BUTCHELL --HER WILL SAID THAT HER HUSBAND COULD CONTROL HER MONEY--"



"--BUT ONLY WHILE SHE REMAINED ABOVE THE GROUND!"

"SHE DIED IN 1775, BUT HER HUSBAND GOT A DOCTOR TO 'PRESERVE' HER--"



"--AND ALTHOUGH SHE WAS STIFF AS A BOARD, HE KEPT HER AND HER MONEY AROUND FOR YEARS."

"SEE, SOMETIMES IT'S JUST FINANCIAL. LIKE IN THE LATE 1980'S, THERE WAS THIS OLD LADY IN BROOKLYN WHO DIED, AND HER FAMILY COULDN'T AFFORD A FUNERAL."



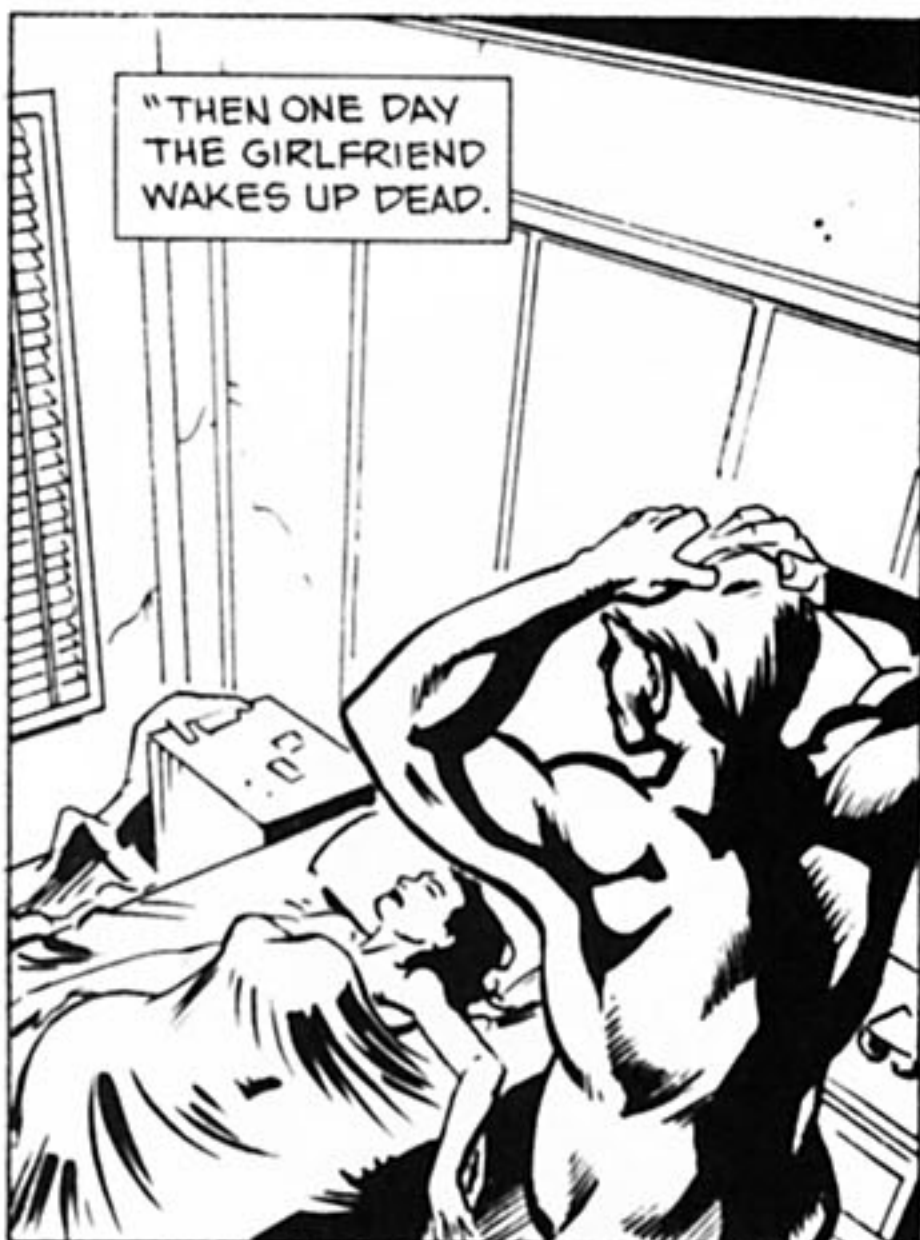
"SO THEY PUT HER IN A STOLEN GROCERY CART AND SET HER OUT WITH THE TRASH."



"AND THEN THERE WAS THIS GUY WHO WAS A MANAGER AT A CITY AGENCY IN NEW YORK. HE HAD IT ALL: A GOOD JOB, A WIFE--AND A GIRLFRIEND."



"THEN ONE DAY THE GIRLFRIEND WAKES UP DEAD."



"HE'S GOT TO DISPOSE OF THE BODY BEFORE HIS WIFE OR ANYONE ELSE FINDS OUT--SO WHAT'S HE DO? HE SETS IT OUT WITH THE TRASH AND GOES TO WORK!"



"SOMETIMES PEOPLE JUST CAN'T ACCEPT DEATH. THERE WAS A CASE IN INDIANA A FEW YEARS BACK..."

I SAID, DO YOU WANT SOME ICED TEA, GRAM?!

SHE'S GOING DEAF, I THINK.



"...AND A FEW MONTHS LATER, IN FLORIDA..."

I SAID, GRAMPA, WOULD YOU LIKE SOME LEMONADE?!

GRAMPA CAN'T HEAR NO MORE!



"OR THERE WAS THIS OTHER OLD LADY IN BROOKLYN."



"SHE LIVED WITH HER FIVE GROWN CHILDREN--"

"--AND THEN SHE GOT A BRAIN TUMOR."

"BUT SHE WAS A RELIGIOUS WOMAN, SO SHE STOPPED TAKING HER MEDICINE AND TOLD HER KIDS THAT GOD WOULD MAKE HER WELL."



"HER KIDS KEPT TAKING CARE OF HER, WASHING HER AND CHANGING HER CLOTHES AND WAITING FOR GOD TO MAKE HER WELL, FOR ABOUT A YEAR AND A HALF AFTER SHE DIED."



I THINK FOR SOME PEOPLE, NOT GETTING BURIED IS A RELIGIOUS THING.

WHA...? HUH? OH, YEAH.



"IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, EITHER. DID YOU READ ABOUT THAT GURU WHO DIED IN INDIA? HIS NAME WAS, LIKE, THAKUR BALAK BRAHMACHARI.



"HIS FOLLOWERS THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO BE RESURRECTED IN A COUPLE OF WEEKS, SO THEY PUT HIS BODY ON ICE.



"THEY WASHED OFF THE GURU AND CHANGED HIS ROBES EVERY DAY FOR WEEKS.



"THOUSANDS OF PILGRIMS CAME TO SEE THIS GUY COME BACK TO LIFE. WHEN THE ICE UNDER THE GURU MELTED, HIS DISCIPLES SAID IT WAS HOLY WATER AND GAVE IT TO THE PILGRIMS TO DRINK.



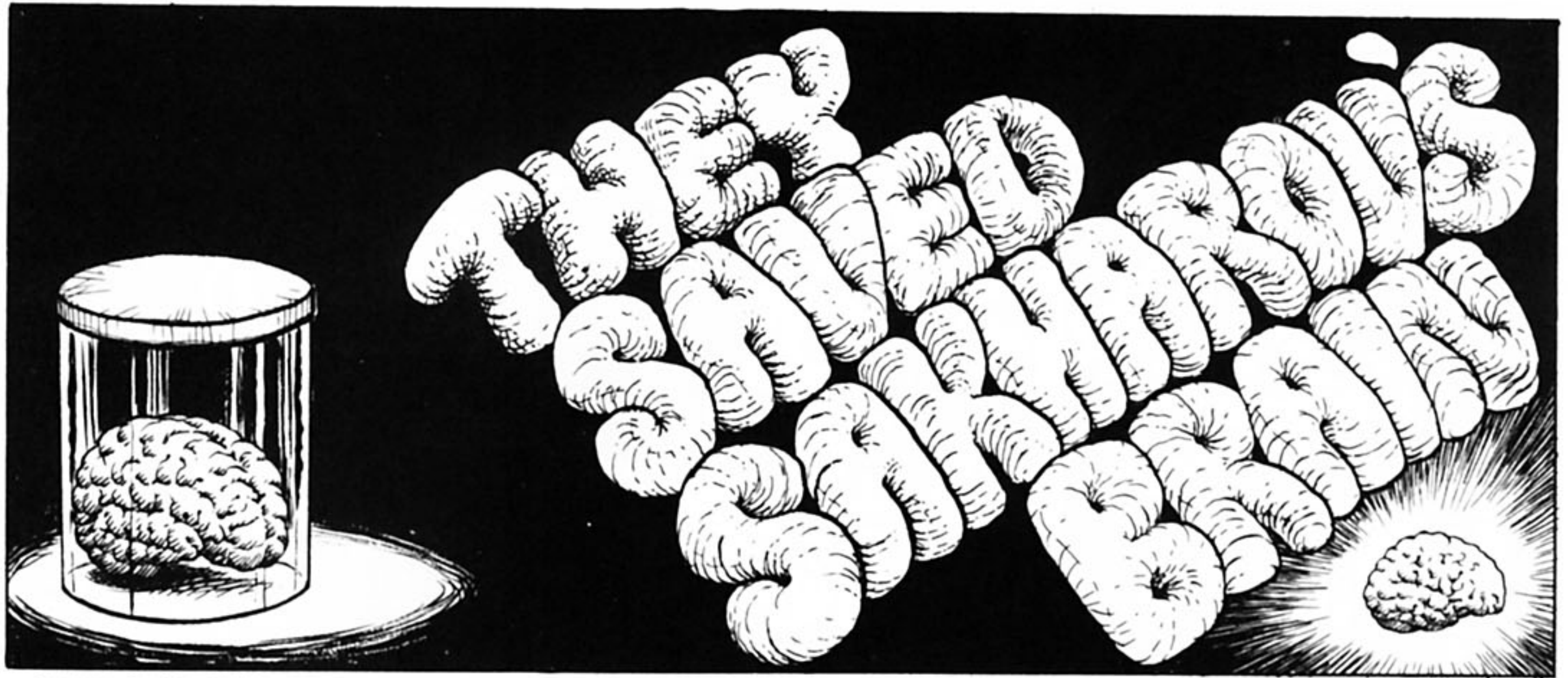
"TWO MONTHS AFTER THE GURU DIED, 1200 POLICE FROM CALCUTTA STORMED THE ASHRAM, CAPTURED THE BODY, AND TOOK IT TO A CREMATORIUM."



I JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THESE PEOPLE HANG AROUND, YOU KNOW? I MEAN, WHEN IT'S TIME TO GO, IT'S TIME TO GO!

ARRRGH!





CHRIS D. OF WINCHESTER, MASS., ASKS—

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU DONATE YOUR BODY TO SCIENCE?



UNIFORM DONOR CARD

OF _____
(Print or type name of donor)
 In the hope that I may help others, I hereby make this anatomical gift, if medically acceptable, to take effect upon my death. The words and

WELL, CHRIS, TWO THINGS HAVE TO OCCUR BEFORE YOU CAN DONATE YOUR BODY.

for the purposes of transplantation, therapy, medical education or education:
 (c) _____ my body for anatomical study if needed.

Limitations or special wishes, if any: _____

Signed by the donor and the following two witnesses in the presence of each other:

 Signature of Donor Date of Birth of Donor

 Date Signed _____

 Witness

FIRST, YOU HAVE TO FILL OUT A DONOR CARD...

This is a legal document under the Uniform Anatomical Gifts Act or similar laws.

For further information consult your local medical society or:
 Continental Association of Funeral & Memorial Societies
 128 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20004

...AND SECOND, YOU HAVE TO BE DEAD.



IT'S BEST IF YOU DIE IN A WAY THAT LEAVES YOUR BODY RELATIVELY INTACT—IN A HOSPITAL OR NURSING HOME, FOR INSTANCE.



A BADLY DAMAGED BODY IS LESS SUITABLE FOR DONATION.



BUT IF YOUR BODY'S IN ONE PIECE, IT WILL BE WHISKED TO THE MEDICAL SCHOOL OF YOUR CHOICE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



THERE, THE PRE-MED JERKS YOU HATED IN COLLEGE WILL SPEND 2 YEARS CARVING YOU UP, PLAYING PRANKS WITH YOUR REMAINS, AND USING YOU TO QUALIFY FOR THEIR OVERPAID CAREERS.



WHEN THEY'RE DONE WITH YOU, THE SCHOOL CREMATES YOUR REMAINS AND EITHER DISPOSES OF THEM OR RETURNS THEM TO YOUR FAMILY.

WHO WAS AT THE DOOR?

UH... IT'S DAD.



BUT NO MATTER WHAT YOUR WISHES WERE, IF YOUR FAMILY OBJECTS, YOUR REMAINS PROBABLY WON'T BE ACCEPTED FOR DONATION.



SOME PEOPLE HAVE RELIGIOUS OBJECTIONS TO BODY DONATION.

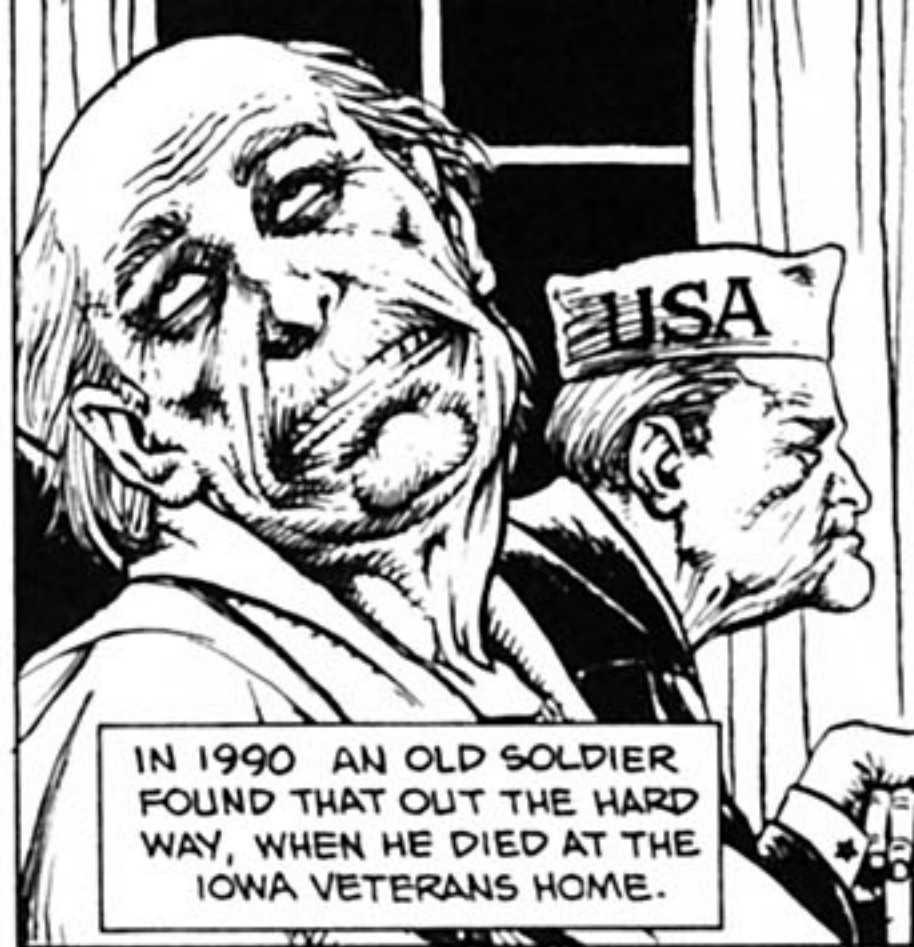
AND SOME PEOPLE THINK IT HAPPENS LIKE IN THOSE OLD BORIS KARLOFF MOVIES.

HERE'S A FRESH ONE, DOCTOR.

AH, GOOD! GOOD!



BUT EVEN IF *EVERYONE* APPROVES OF THE DONATION, IT'S BEST TO CHECK THAT THE PROSPECTIVE MEDICAL SCHOOL KNOWS YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY.



IN 1990 AN OLD SOLDIER FOUND THAT OUT THE HARD WAY, WHEN HE DIED AT THE IOWA VETERANS HOME.

ALTHOUGH HE'D SIGNED A DONOR CARD FOR A SPECIFIC MIDWESTERN MEDICAL SCHOOL, HE WASN'T LISTED IN THE COMPUTERIZED DATA BANK.

NO, I DON'T SEE THAT NAME HERE...

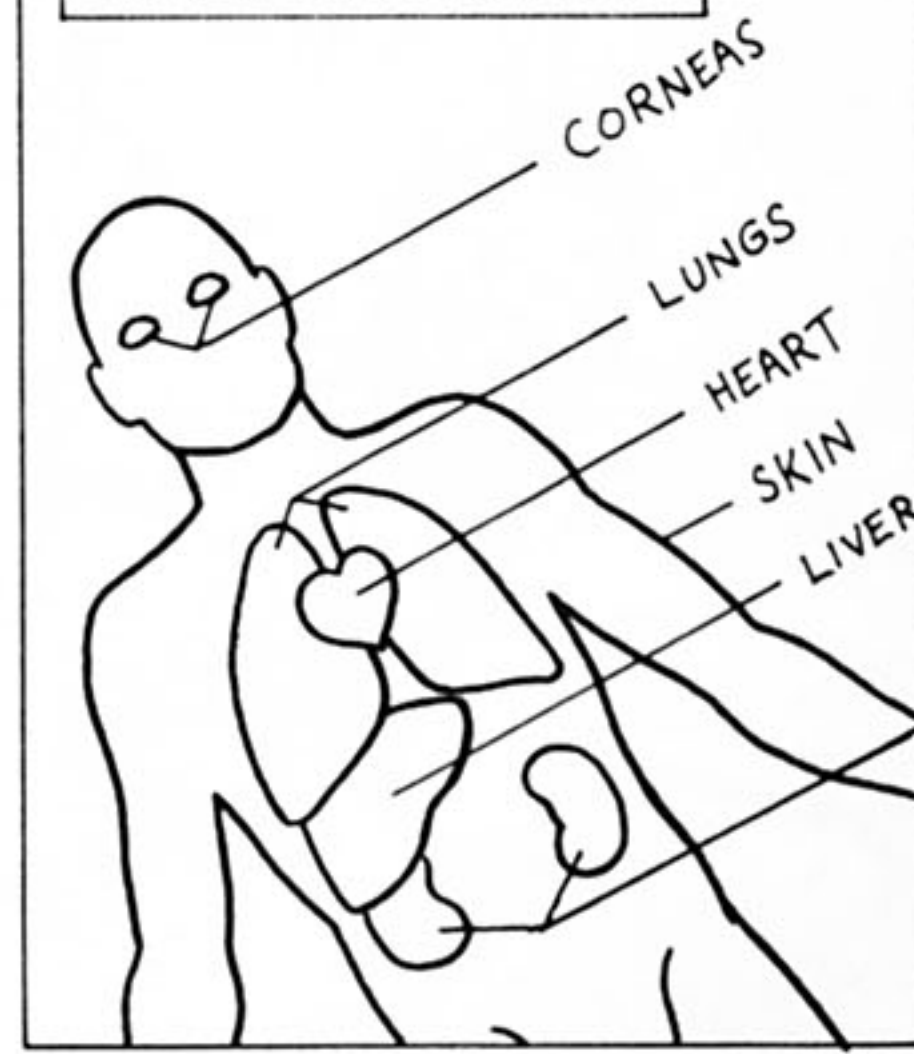


THE SCHOOL REFUSED TO TAKE HIM, FORCING THE NEWLY-DECEASED'S DAUGHTER TO SPEND HOURS ON THE PHONE FRANTICALLY SEARCHING FOR SOMEPLACE TO PUT HIM... BEFORE SETTLING FOR A THIRD-RATE MEDICAL SCHOOL.

MAYBE IF HE'D HAD BETTER TEST SCORES...



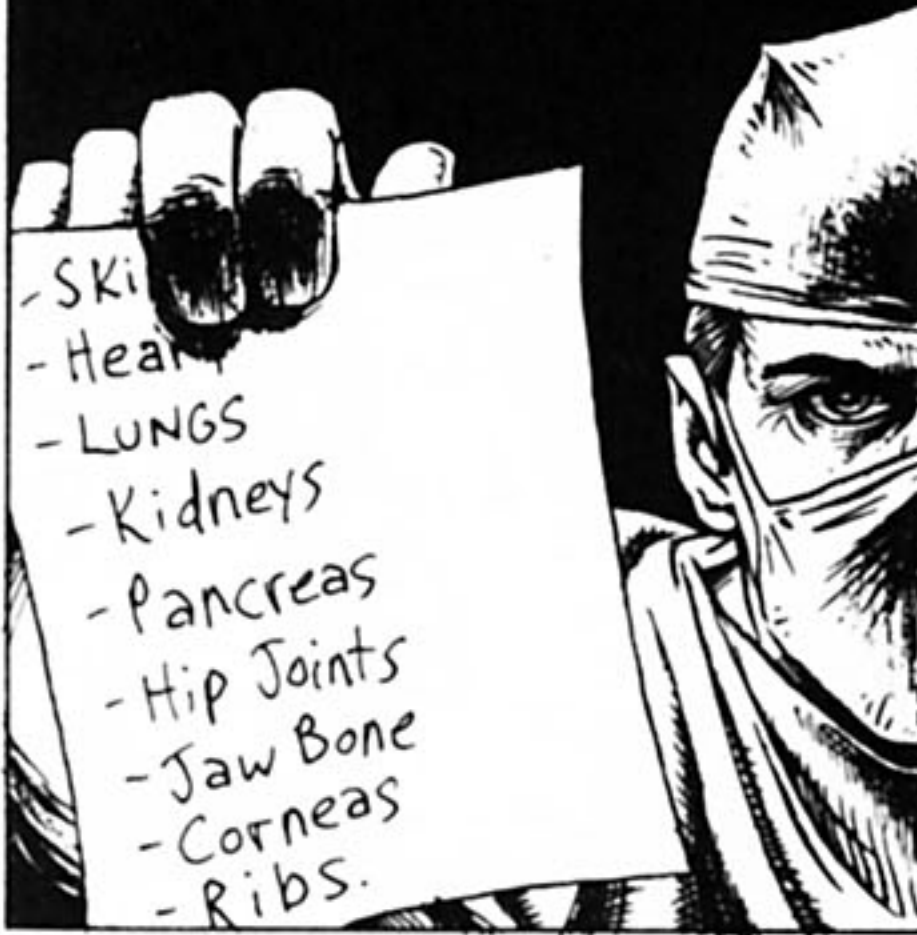
OF COURSE, SOME PEOPLE DONATE JUST A PARTICULAR PART OF THEIR ANATOMY.



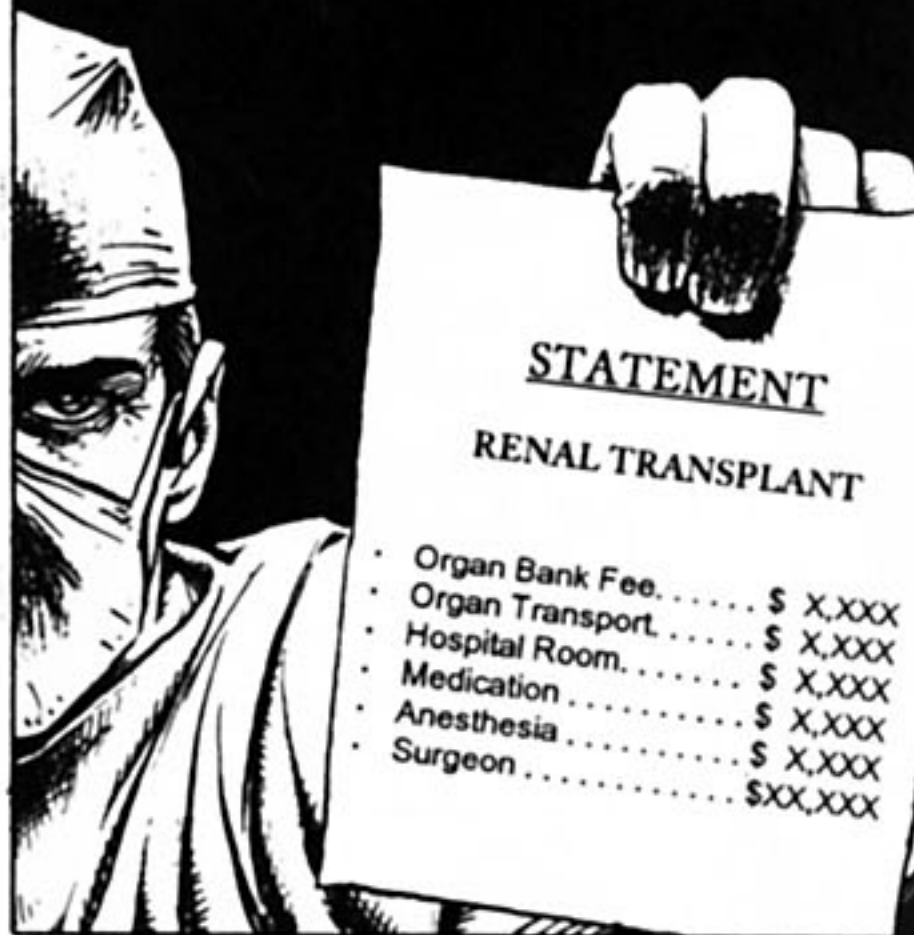
IN THAT CASE, THEY CARVE YOU UP AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



THE TRANSPLANT DOCTORS HAVE A PRETTY LONG WISH-LIST OF PARTS.



EVERYBODY MAKES MONEY OFF TRANSPLANTS.



EVERYONE EXCEPT YOU! YOU HAVE TO GIVE YOUR ORGANS AWAY, BECAUSE IT'S ILLEGAL TO BUY OR SELL ORGANS FOR TRANSPLANT.



IN 1990, A COUNTY SUPERVISOR IN MILWAUKEE PROPOSED TO OFFSET THE COST OF BURYING WELFARE RECIPIENTS BY SELLING THEIR ORGANS—WITH OR WITHOUT THEIR CONSENT.



IF THEY CAN'T HELP SOCIETY WHILE THEY'RE ALIVE, MAYBE THEY CAN HELP IT WHILE THEY'RE DEAD.



THE PLAN FAILED TO WIN APPROVAL.

BUT THAT GUY IN MILWAUKEE WAS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING—IT'S HARD TO FIND DONOR ORGANS.



UNLESS YOU'RE THE GOVERNOR OF PENNSYLVANIA, WHO JUST HAPPENED TO FIND A HEART AND A LIVER WITHIN *HOURS* OF BEING PLACED ON AN ORGAN WAITING LIST.



THE FOLKS AT CALIFORNIA'S LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY HAVE BEEN PIONEERS IN FINDING NEW SOURCES OF TRANSPLANTABLE ORGANS.



...THEN THEY BEGAN THE ANACEPHALIC HARVESTING PROGRAM.



BUT ANACEPHALICS ARE BORN WITHOUT BRAINS.



SO LET'S COLLECT ANACEPHALIC BABIES, KEEP THEM ALIVE, AND THEN 'HARVEST' THEIR ORGANS WHEN WE NEED SOME FOR TRANSPLANTS!

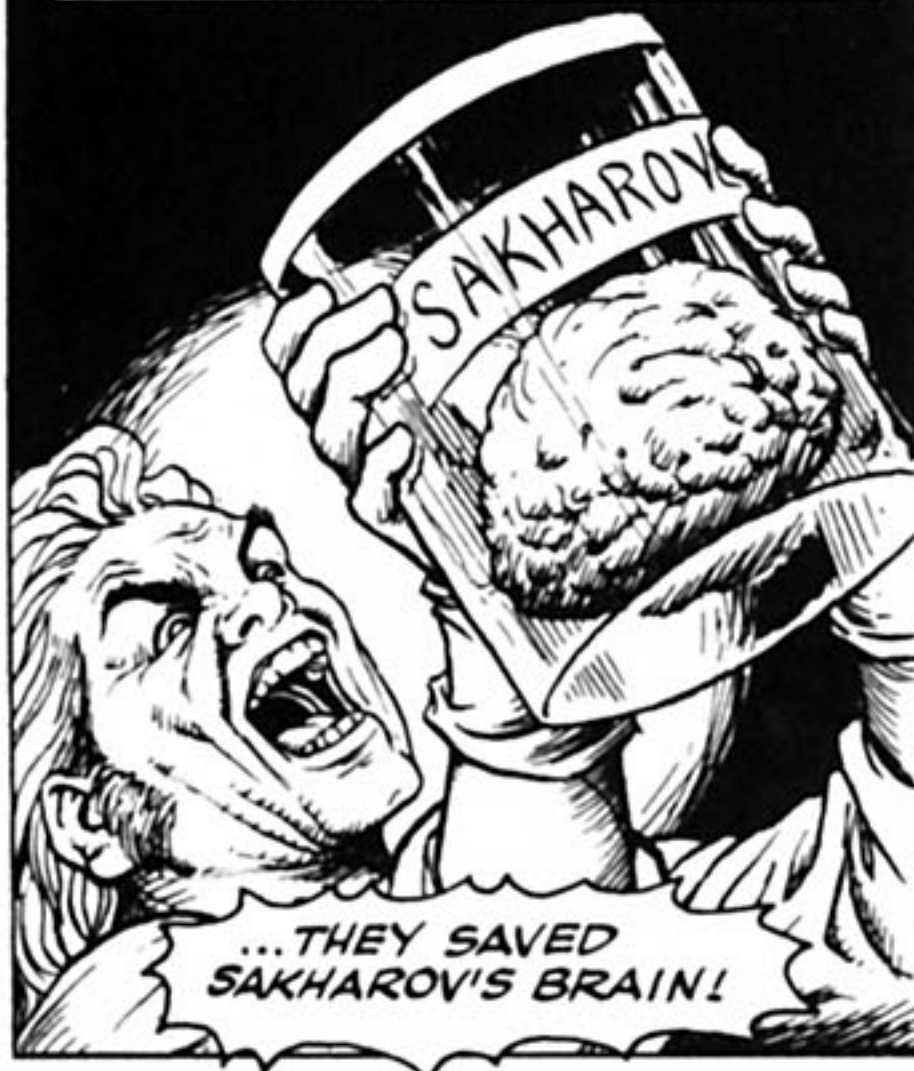


BAD PUBLICITY PUT AN END TO THE PROJECT.

BRAINS WERE ONE OF THE MOST PRIZED ORGANS FOR SECRET MEDICAL RESEARCH AT THE INSTITUTE OF THE FORMER USSR ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, FOUNDED IN 1926 TO STUDY THE BRAIN OF DEAD VLADIMIR LENIN.

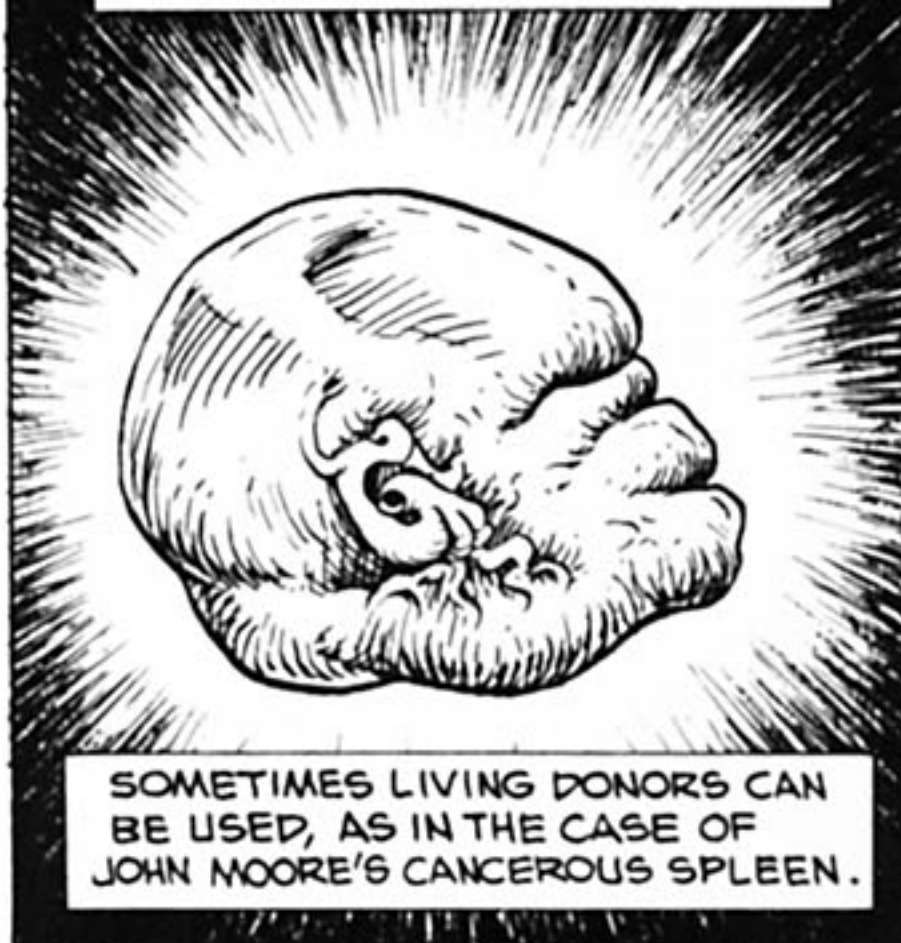


AND WHEN SCIENTIST AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST ANDREI SAKHAROV DIED IN 1989...



...THEY SAVED SAKHAROV'S BRAIN!

BUT IF THE ORGAN IN QUESTION ISN'T VITAL FOR SURVIVAL, DONORS DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE DEAD —



SOMETIMES LIVING DONORS CAN BE USED, AS IN THE CASE OF JOHN MOORE'S CANCEROUS SPLEEN.

DOCTORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA REMOVED MOORE'S SPLEEN IN 1989. AFTER THE OPERATION, MOORE RECOVERED NICELY.



BUT THE DOCTORS USED THE SPECIAL SPLEEN TO CREATE INTERFERON. THE DOCTORS MADE MILLIONS OF DOLLARS.



JOHN MOORE ENDED UP WITH NOTHING —



— NOT EVEN A SPLEEN.

AND THAT'S WHY THEY PREFER BRAIN-DEAD DONORS — YOU'D HAVE TO BE BRAIN DEAD TO GIVE AWAY SUCH VALUABLE PROPERTY!





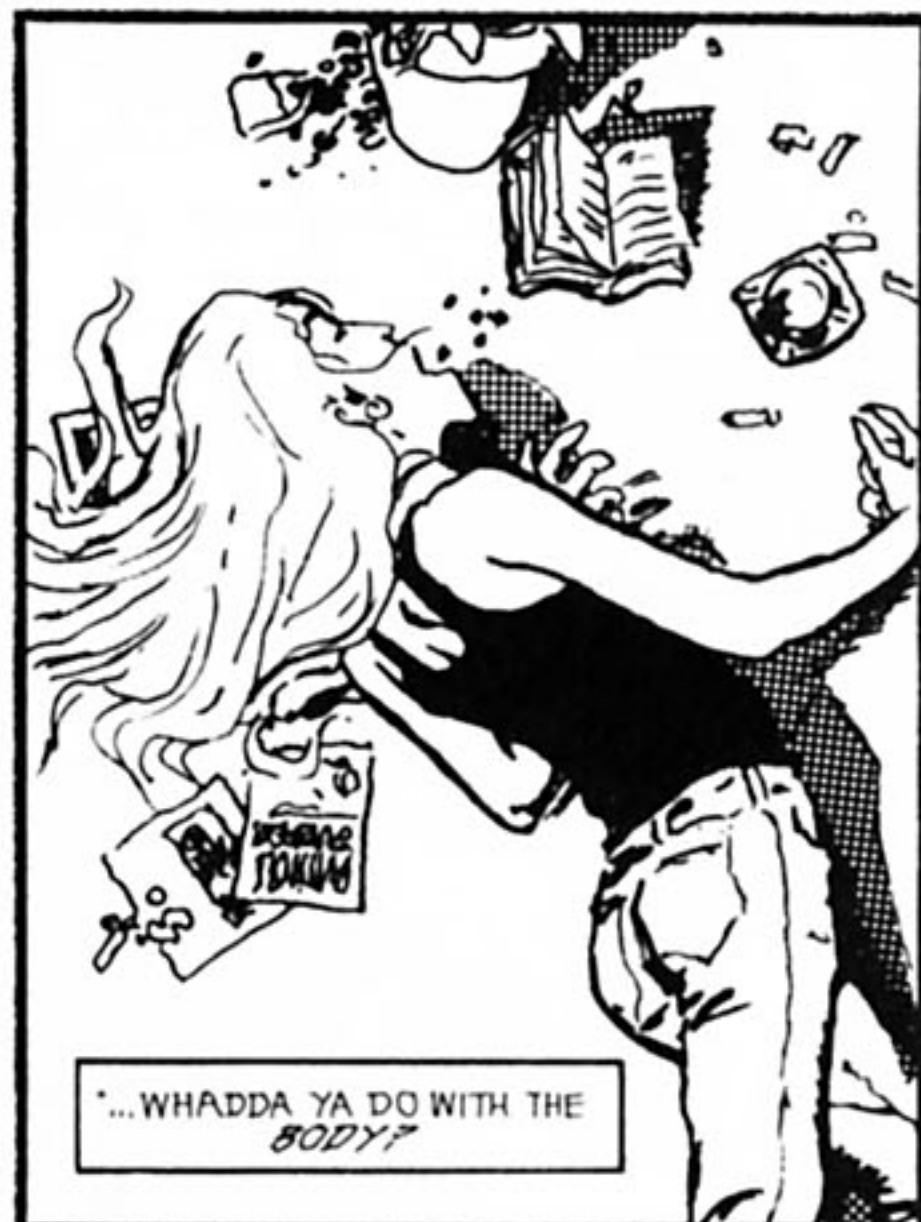
"IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HIS APARTMENT;
SHE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HIS FRIEND.



"SO HE KILLS HER.
I DUNNO, MAYBE
IT WAS ACCIDENTAL.
BUT THEN HE'S
GOT A REAL
PROBLEM...



"...WHADDA YA DO WITH THE
BODY?"



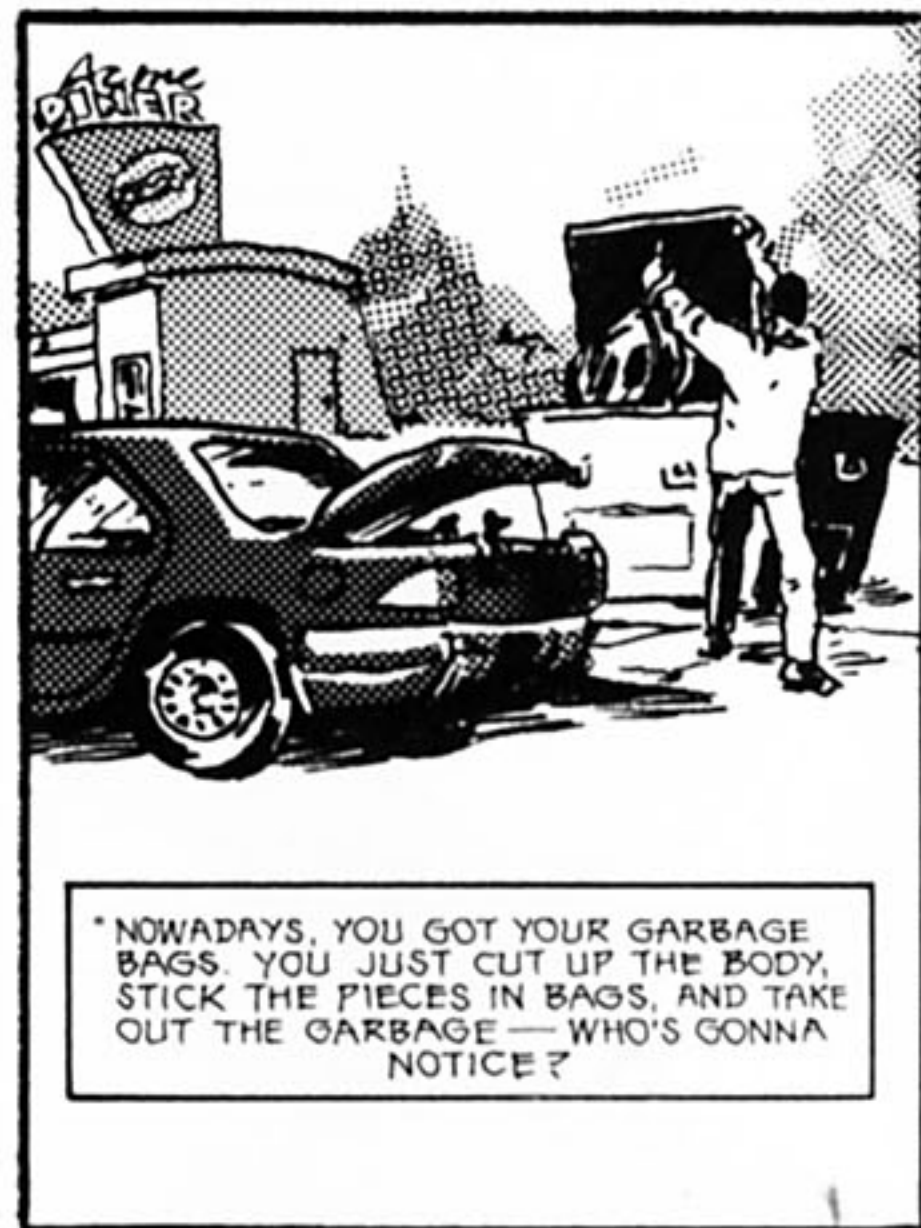
"IN THE OLD DAYS, YOU JUST STUCK THE BODY
IN A STEAMER TRUNK AND SHIPPED IT
TO SOME MADE-UP ADDRESS IN FLORIDA.



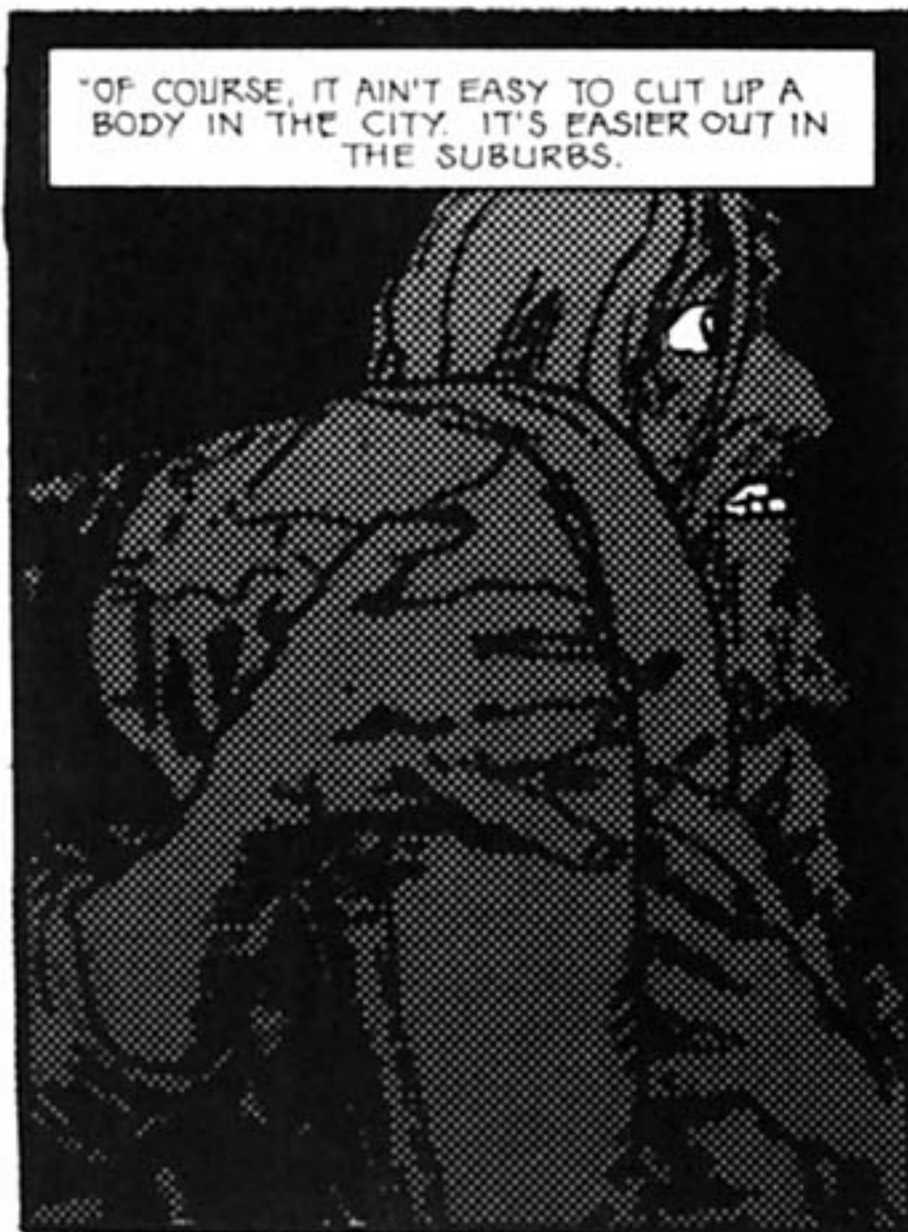
"AFTER A FEW DAYS IT WOULD START
TO LEAK AND SMELL, AND SOMEONE
WOULD NOTICE, AND THEN THEY'D
TRY TO TRACE IT BACK TO YOU.



"NOWADAYS, YOU GOT YOUR GARBAGE
BAGS. YOU JUST CUT UP THE BODY,
STICK THE PIECES IN BAGS, AND TAKE
OUT THE GARBAGE — WHO'S GONNA
NOTICE?"



"OF COURSE, IT AIN'T EASY TO CUT UP A
BODY IN THE CITY. IT'S EASIER OUT IN
THE SUBURBS.



"LIKE THAT GUY WHO KILLED HIS WIFE
IN CONNECTICUT. HE JUST FIRED UP
THE CHAINSAW...



"...THEN PUT THE PIECES THROUGH A
WOOD CHIPPER. NOTHIN' LEFT BUT
ONE FINGERNAIL AND SOME LITTLE
BITS OF BONE...



"...JUST ENOUGH TO PUT HIM IN PRISON
FOR A LONG, LONG TIME."



SEE, IT JUST AIN'T THAT EASY TO GET RID OF A BODY. EVEN THE PROS HAVE TROUBLE, YOU KNOW?



"TAKE THOMAS PITERA, THE BIG HITMAN FOR THE BONANO CRIME FAMILY.

"HERE'S A GUY WHO MADE A STUDY OF KILLING PEOPLE. HE PROBABLY OWNED EVERY BOOK EVER PUBLISHED ON THE SUBJECT— HIS 'LIBRARY OF DEATH,' THE PAPERS CALLED IT.



"HOW DID HE GET RID OF A BODY?" HE CUT IT UP. TOOK HIS CLOTHES OFF SO HE WOULDN'T GET BLOOD ON 'EM, AND CUT UP THE BODY IN A BATHTUB.

"AND THIS GUY WAS A PRO."



IT'S NOT LIKE YOU COULD BURY A BODY WITH ALL THIS PAVEMENT, RIGHT?

ANYWAY, SOMETIMES YOU GET THESE GENIUSES, THEY THINK THEY'LL BURN THE BODY — LIKE THIS GUY RAYMOND VARGAS.



"ONE DAY HE KILLS THIS GIRL ON THE WILLIAMSBURG BRIDGE. DOES HE THROW THE BODY INTO THE WATER, LIKE YOU MIGHT THINK?



"NO. HE LEAVES THE BODY ON THE CATWALK OF THE BRIDGE WHILE HE GOES TO GET HIS GIRLFRIEND. THEY BUY A DOLLAR'S WORTH OF GASOLINE...



"...AND GO BACK UP ON THE BRIDGE TO SET THE BODY ON FIRE. OF COURSE, THE BODY DOESN'T BURN TOO GOOD — IT'S POUND AND VARGAS GETS CAUGHT.



IT'S HARD TO BURN A BODY, WE'RE MOSTLY MADE OF WATER, RIGHT?

A CREMATORIUM TAKES AN HOUR OF BURNIN' SOMEBODY AT 1600 DEGREES TO MAKE ASHES.



SO HOW CAN SOME GUY WITH A BUCK'S WORTH OF GASOLINE DO IT? AIN'T NO WAY. HERE IN THE CITY, YOU JUST GOTTA SAW 'EM UP.



"EVEN SO, IT'S TOUGH WORK."

"RAKOWITZ SAID IT TOOK 'IM TEN DAYS TO SAW UP MONIKA."



"HE FLUSHED THE LITTLE BITS DOWN THE TOILET, THREW HER FEET IN THE EAST RIVER, AND THE REST..."

"...THE REST, HE BOILED."



"I WAS SITTING RIGHT HERE THE DAY RAKOWITZ CAME OVER TO FEED US. HE HAD A BUNCH OF PLASTIC CUPS AND A BIG BUCKET OF SOUP."



"I WASN'T FEELIN' TOO GOOD THAT DAY, Y'KNOW? SO I DIDN'T HAVE ANY. SAME WITH MY BUDDY MILT. BUT OUR PAL SPIDER WAS RIGHT THERE — SPIDER TOOK SOME SOUP."



"HE WAS DRINKIN' IT, TOO, UNTIL MILT NOTICED THE FINGER FLOATIN' IN IT."



"I DUNNO, MAN... I JUST DON'T KNOW WHAT RAKOWITZ WAS THINKIN' UP 'TIL THEN. NOBODY'D REALLY NOTICED THAT MONIKA WAS MISSIN'."

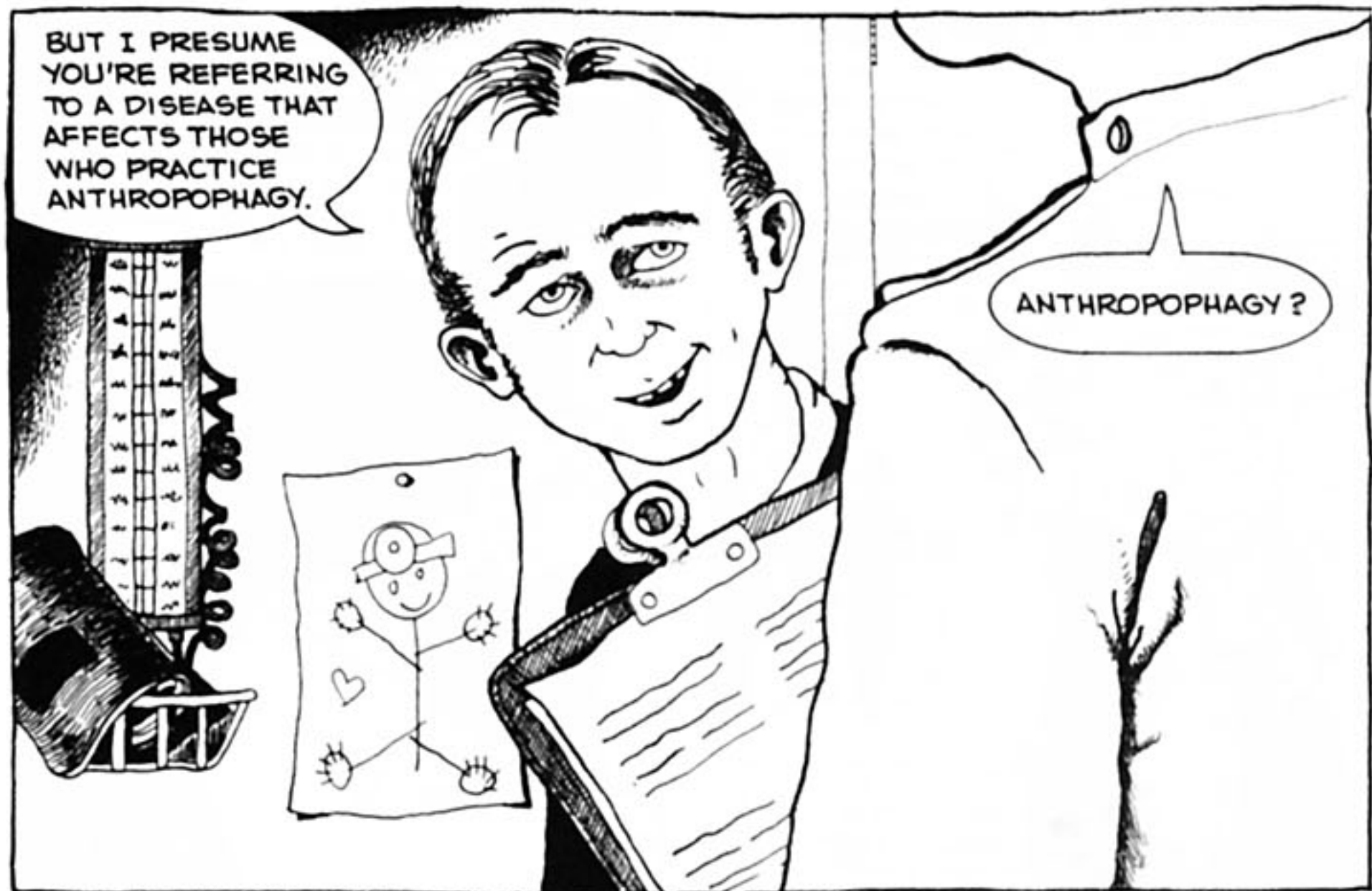
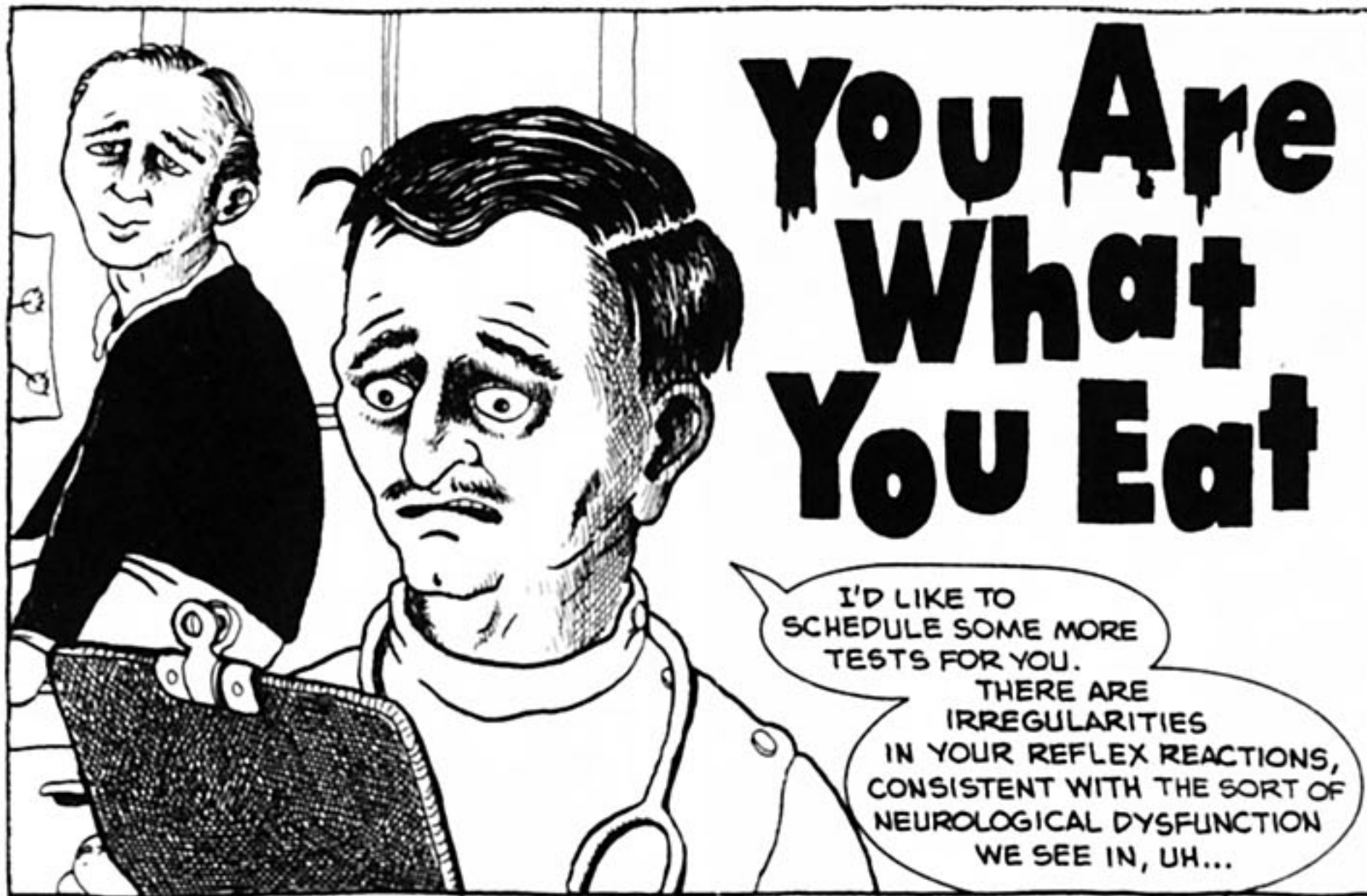


BUT THEN THE COPS STARTED ASKING QUESTIONS AND DANIEL FINALLY LED 'EM OVER TO THE PORT AUTHORITY, WHERE HE'D STASHED HER BONES — IN GARBAGE BAGS."



SO NOW HE'S IN THE MENTAL HOSPITAL. I TELL YA, HE SHOULD'VE STUCK TO THE GARBAGE BAGS."

NOBODY NOTICES SOMEONE TAKIN' OUT THE GARBAGE."





"IN THE AUTUMN OF 1874, PACKER AND HIS FIVE COMPANIONS THOUGHT THEY COULD MAKE IT OVER THE ROCKIES BEFORE THE SNOWS CAME.



"THEY WERE WRONG.

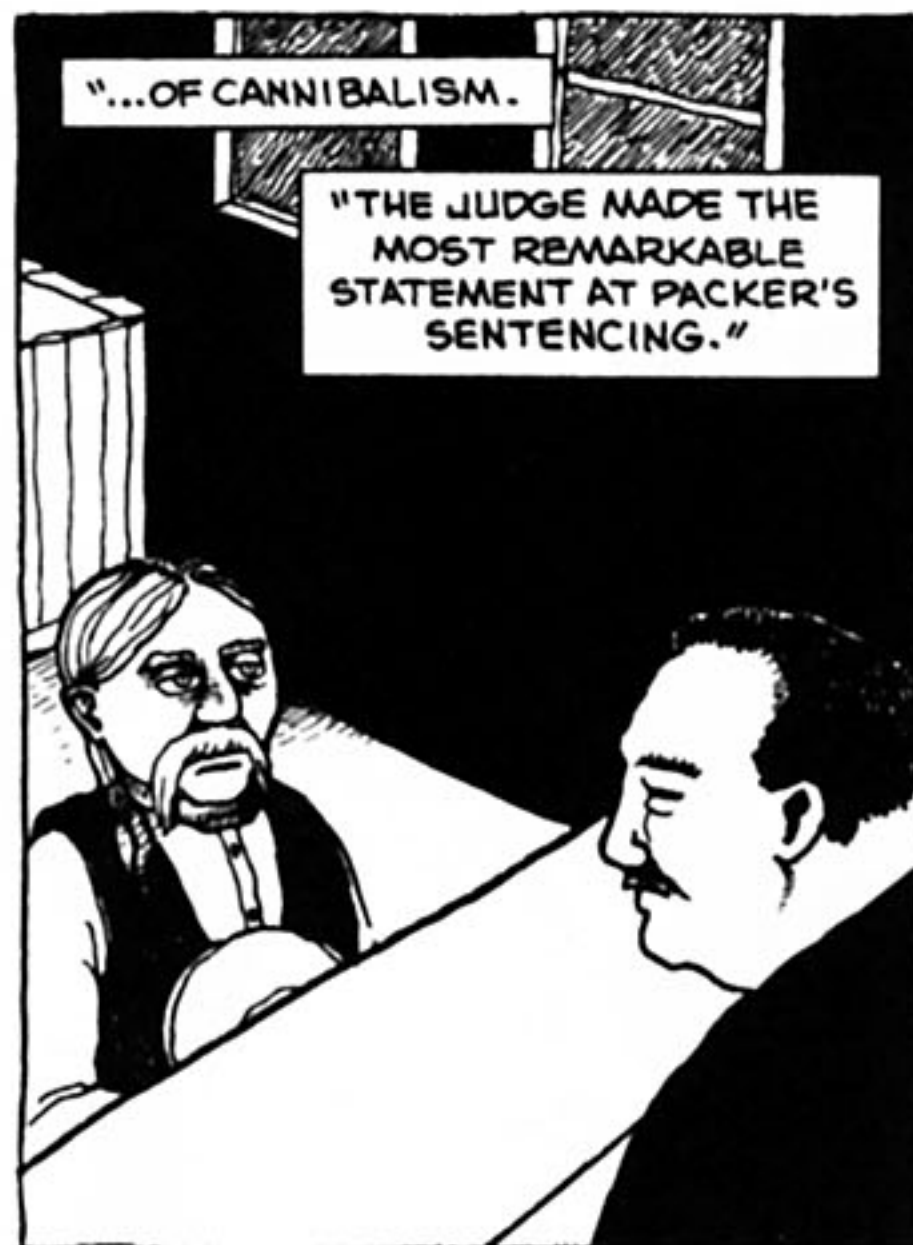


"IN SPRING, ALFERD CAME BACK—THE REST WERE NEVER SEEN AGAIN.



"OF COURSE, THERE WERE ANY NUMBER OF WILD RUMORS FLYING ABOUT.

"FINALLY, HE WAS TRIED AND CONVICTED—



"...OF CANNIBALISM.

"THE JUDGE MADE THE MOST REMARKABLE STATEMENT AT PACKER'S SENTENCING."



THERE WAS SEVEN DEMOCRATS IN HINSDALE COUNTY, AND YOU'VE ATE FIVE OF THEM, GOD DAMN YOU!



JUST RECENTLY, SOME FORENSIC SCIENTISTS DUG UP THE REMAINS OF PACKER'S COMPANIONS TO FIND OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.



"THEY EXAMINED THE BONES AND WHAT-NOT, AND CONCLUDED THAT PACKER REALLY HAD BUTCHERED AND EATEN THE OTHER MEN!"



GUILTY AS CHARGED! HA HA HA HA HA! AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S REALLY MARVELOUS, DOCTOR?

WHAT?

THE STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER NAMED THEIR DINING HALL AFTER HIM! THE ALFERD PACKER MEMORIAL—
HA HA HA!



I TELL YOU, DOCTOR, PACKER WAS *NOTHING!* HE KILLED AND ATE THOSE MEN SIMPLY BECAUSE HE WAS HUNGRY. ONCE HE GOT OUT OF PRISON, HE NEVER DID IT AGAIN.



"AND OF COURSE, THERE WAS THE PLANE CRASH OF THE URUGUAYAN RUGBY TEAM. THE ONES WHO SURVIVED ATE THE ONES WHO DIDN'T — BUT THEY DIDN'T *KILL* THEM.



"ALTHOUGH MOST OF THEM WERE GOOD CATHOLICS, SO AT LEAST THEY HAD THE RIGHT IDEA ABOUT IT.

"ANTHROPOPHAGY IS A RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE!"



"CENTRAL AFRICAN PEOPLE, SOUTH AMERICAN NATIVES, AUSTRALIAN TRIBES — I TELL YOU, DOCTOR, EVEN *ESKIMOS* — HAVE PRACTICED CANNIBALISM!"



"IN *MANY* CULTURES MIGHTY WARRIORS HAVE EATEN THE FLESH OF THEIR FOES AS PART OF A RITUAL TO GAIN BRAVERY OR WISDOM."



OF COURSE, THAT'S "EXO-CANNIBALISM" — EATING THE FLESH OF SOMEONE OUTSIDE YOUR OWN FAMILY OR TRIBE. THERE'S ALSO "ENDO-CANNIBALISM"...



"...INVOLVING ONE'S NEAREST AND DEAREST. THE ANCIENT SLAVONIC PEOPLE, FOR INSTANCE, ONLY ATE THEIR PARENTS."



"AS A LAST WISH, DYING MEMBERS OF ORINOCO TRIBES IN VENEZUELA WOULD SELECT WHICH FAMILY MEMBERS WOULD DEVOUR THEM."



"WHENEVER AN AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINE WAS OVERCOME WITH GRIEF AT THE LOSS OF A LOVED ONE, HE'D HAUL OUT A PIECE OF THE DEAR DEPARTED AND GNAW ON IT."



A CHARMING CUSTOM, DON'T YOU THINK? IT'S ACTUALLY VERY SIMILAR TO THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION.



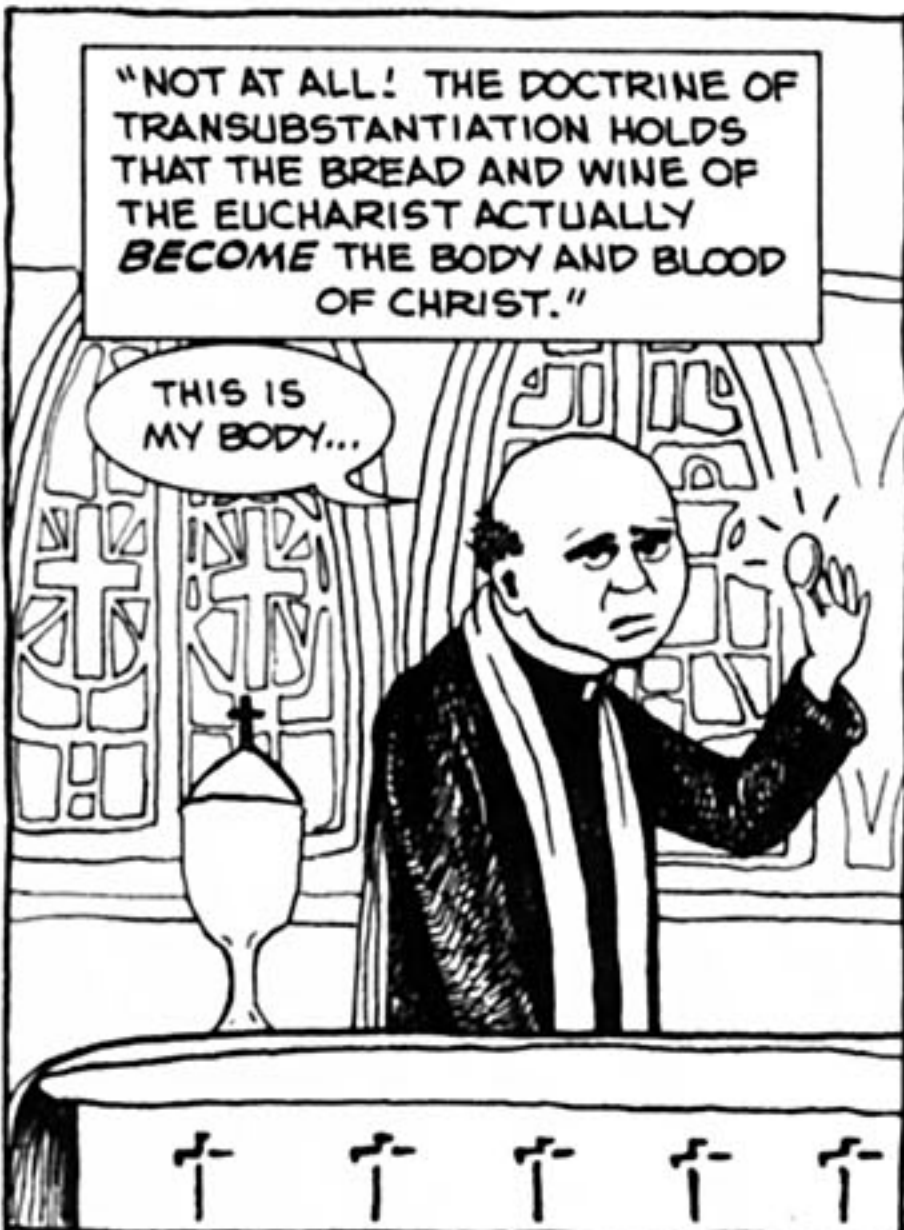
PARTAKING OF THE BLOOD AND BODY OF JESUS HELPS BELIEVERS TO FEEL CLOSER TO HIM.

BUT THAT'S JUST SYMBOLISM—IT'S ONLY BREAD AND WINE.



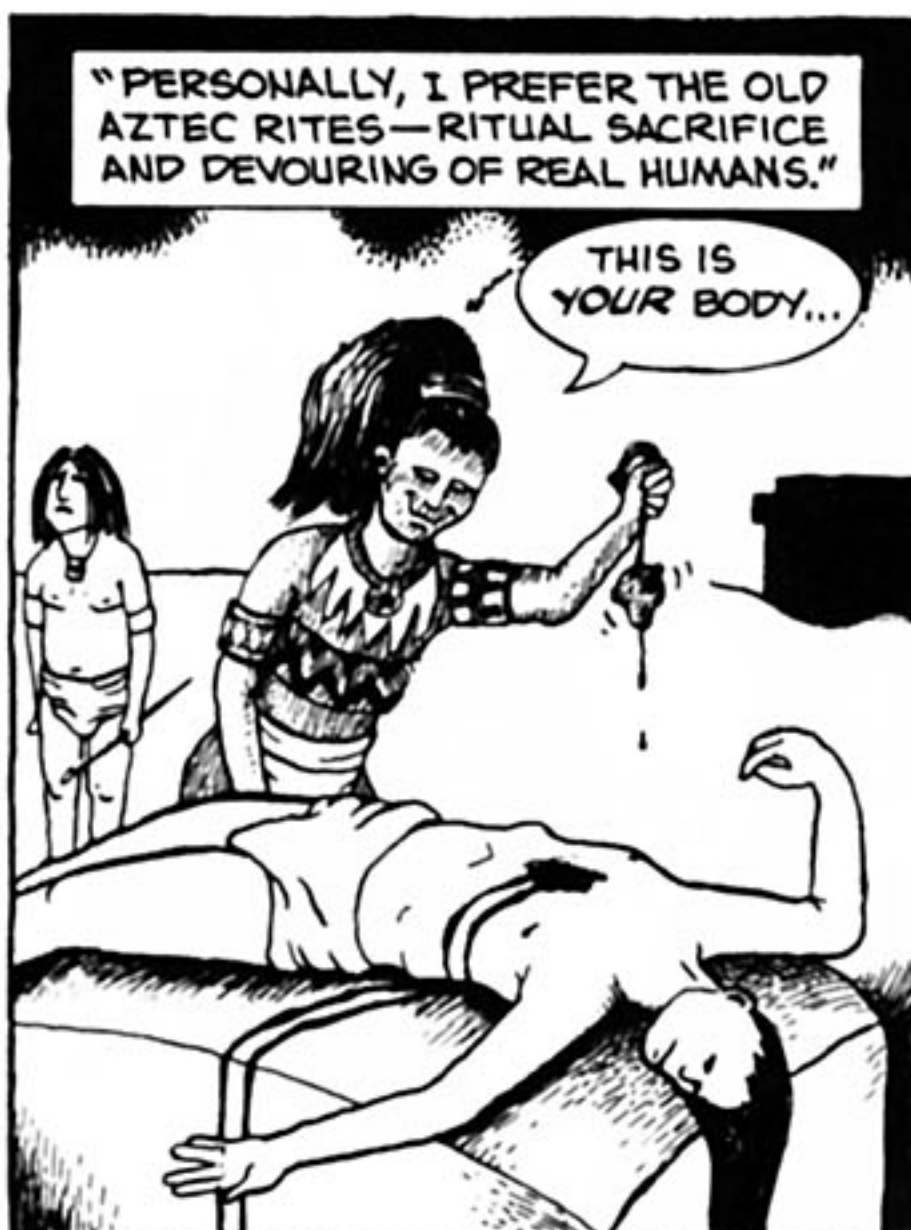
"NOT AT ALL! THE DOCTRINE OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION HOLDS THAT THE BREAD AND WINE OF THE EUCHARIST ACTUALLY BECOME THE BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST."

THIS IS MY BODY...



"PERSONALLY, I PREFER THE OLD AZTEC RITES—RITUAL SACRIFICE AND DEVOURING OF REAL HUMANS."

THIS IS YOUR BODY...



"THE SPANIARDS LED BY CORTÉS WERE SHOCKED—SHOCKED—TO DISCOVER THE AZTECS CELEBRATING ABOUT 15,000 SACRIFICES A YEAR."

"NATURALLY, CONQUEST ENSUED."



"OF COURSE THE SPANIARDS, BEING CATHOLICS, CONVERTED ALL OF THE SURVIVING AZTECS TO THE ONE TRUE RELIGION."

TAKE, EAT. THIS IS MY BODY...

?????



WELL, THIS IS ALL VERY, UH, INTERESTING, BUT WE REALLY SHOULD SET UP YOUR NEXT APPOINTMENT NOW.

YES, OF COURSE. BUT WE COULD CONTINUE THIS CONVERSATION LATER IF YOU'RE FREE TONIGHT...



I'D LOVE TO HAVE YOU FOR DINNER!



"Dear Diary —
Today Steve left me,
just as I knew he would.
Why does this always
happen to me? How
many more times must
I live through a..."



"Dead Love"



"It all started a few weeks
after graduation, when I
landed my first job—as
an apprentice embalmer at
the local funeral home."



"My boss was so nice to
me, and I soon realized
that it was more than
just helping a new
employee."



"Soon, we were having
lunch together almost
every day."



"Instead, I concentrated
even harder on my work.
Then, one fateful day..."



"Embalming Kevin was the most exciting thing I had ever done in my life..."



"Until Todd left us alone!"



"But after two heavenly days together, Kevin and I were torn apart."



"...Then I met Sean!"



"Then there was Eric..."

"Then Jason..."

"And Brian..."

"Was I sick? A pervert? Or just a... slut?!"



"I needed answers, but there was no one I could talk to."

NECROPHILIA: FROM GREEK, NEKROS, "DEAD BODY," AND PHILO, "A LOVING ATTITUDE."



"I read about the French woman who married her fiancé in 1984, after he was shot to death while on duty as a policeman."



"At about the same time, there was a Philippino woman who married her dead fiancé at his funeral."



"But these were women grieving over their loved ones — they weren't like me."



"But Karen Greenlee was. Like me, she was young and pretty and working as an apprentice embalmer.



"And, like me, she had certain... preferences.

"In 1979, she eloped with a corpse from the funeral home where she worked in Sacramento.



"They drove into the desert together and up into the mountains — isn't that romantic?!"



"The two lovers were found the next morning."



"Karen had attempted suicide by overdose, and had left a suicide note which read:

"WHY DO I DO IT? WHY? WHY? FEAR OF LOVE, RELATIONSHIPS. NO ROMANCE EVER HURT LIKE THIS."



"Necrophilia wasn't illegal, so Karen was tried for stealing the hearse and for 'interfering with a burial.'"



"She was sentenced to 11 days in jail, 2 years on probation and a 255-dollar fine."

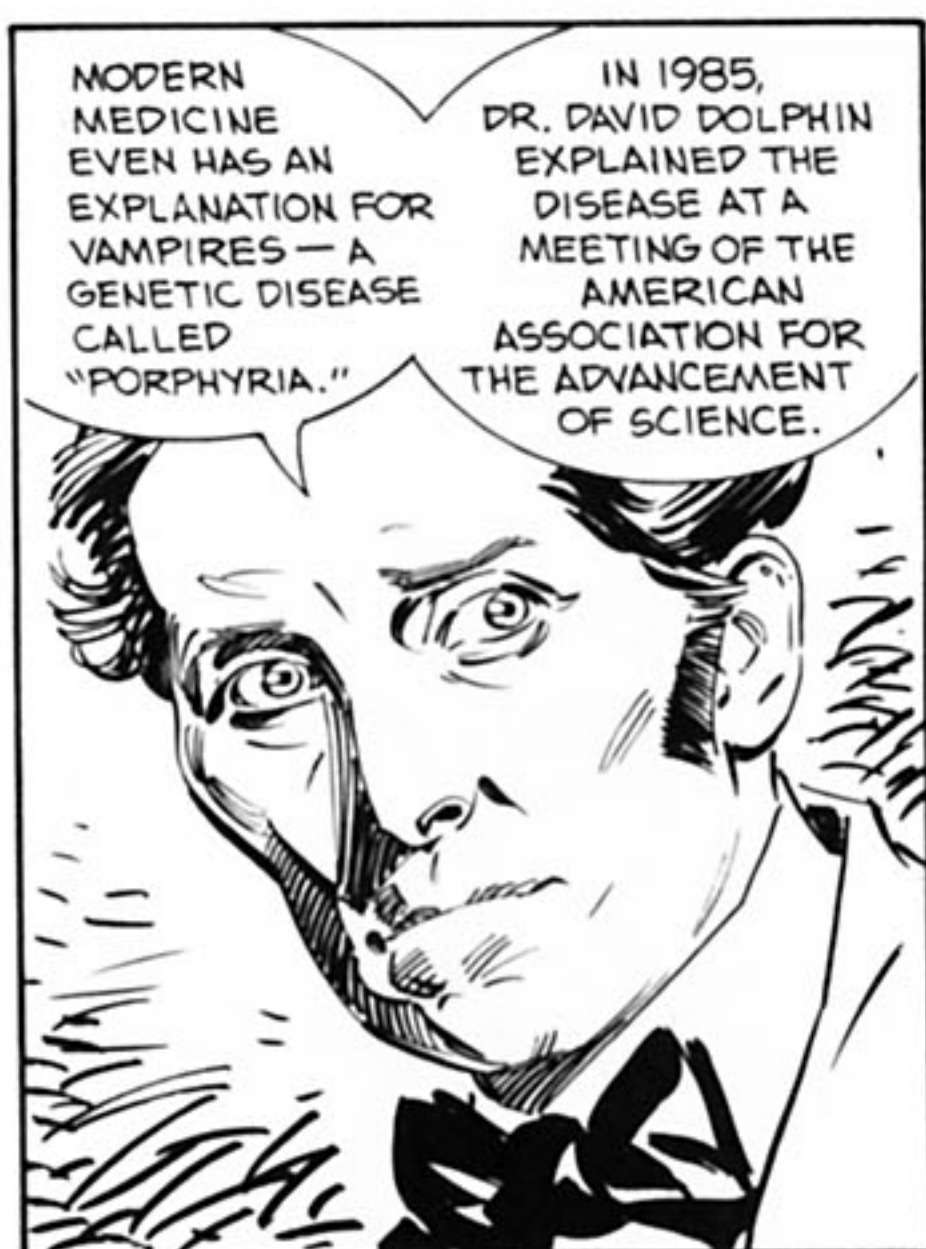


WHEN I WROTE THAT LETTER, I WAS STILL LISTENING TO SOCIETY. EVERYBODY SAID THAT NECROPHILIA WAS WRONG BUT IT MAKES SENSE FOR ME!

"Yes, dear Diary, it does make sense, except for one thing — how can I love Sean, or Kevin, or any of them, when they don't even know I'm alive?!"







"AFTER ALL, HOW ELSE COULD ONE EXPLAIN A SUDDEN RASH OF DEATHS, AN EPIDEMIC, IN A SMALL PRIMITIVE VILLAGE IN THE DAYS BEFORE MODERN MEDICINE?"



"OBVIOUSLY, THESE DEATHS WERE THE WORK OF A *REVENANT*, THE VENGEFUL CORPSE OF AN UNPLEASANT PERSON WHO HAD RECENTLY DIED."



"THE SUSPECT CORPSE MUST BE DISINTERRED AND EXAMINED FOR SIGNS OF EVILDOING, EVIDENCE THAT IT WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF OTHERS!"



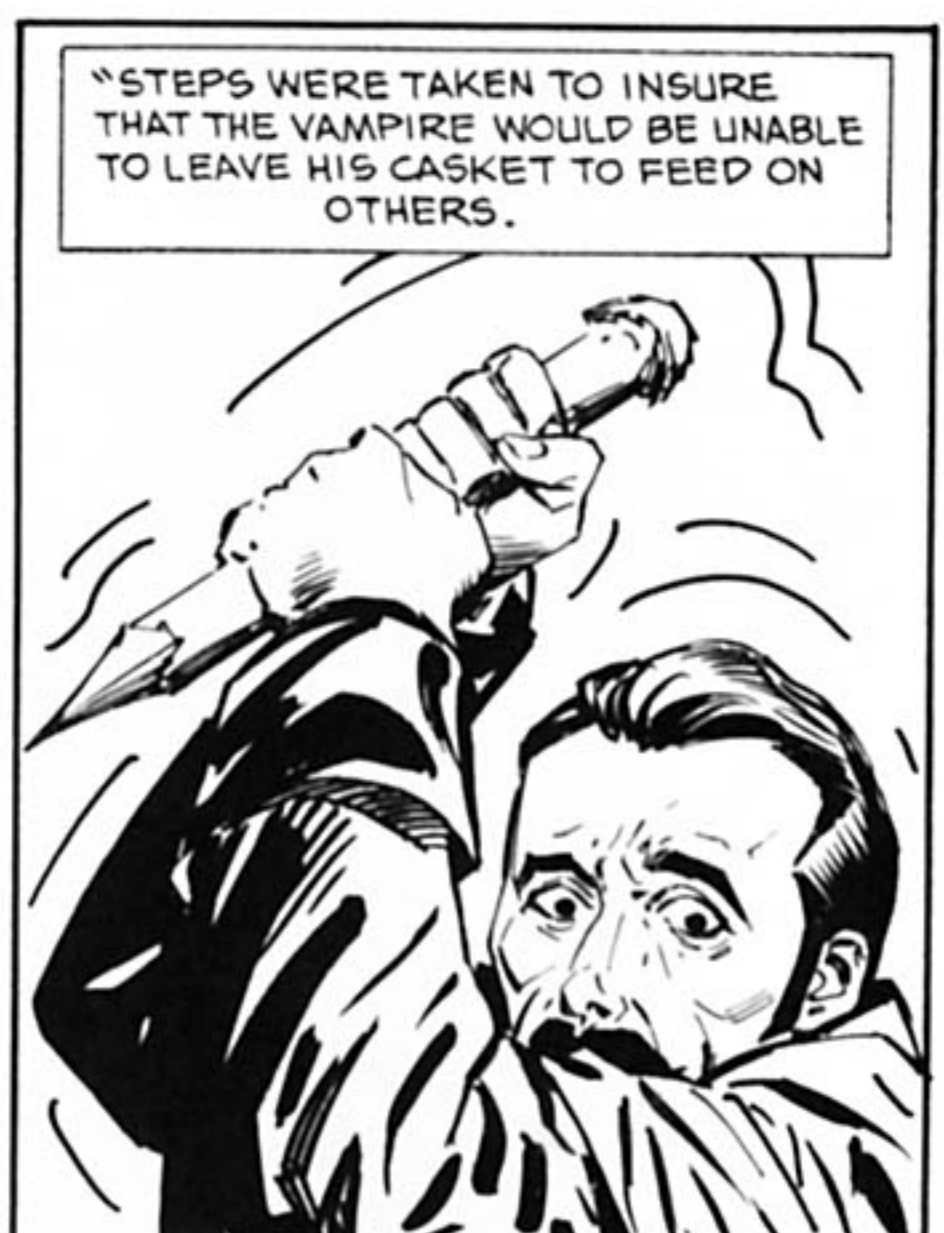
"A COMMON SIGN WAS THAT THE BODY EMITTED A TERRIBLE ODOR."



"ANY DISCHARGE OF FLUIDS OR SWELLING ALSO INDICATED THAT THE CORPSE WAS FEEDING ON THE LIFE-ESSENCE OF OTHER VILLAGERS AND WAS, IN FACT, A *VAMPIRE*."



"STEPS WERE TAKEN TO INSURE THAT THE VAMPIRE WOULD BE UNABLE TO LEAVE HIS CASKET TO FEED ON OTHERS."



"OF COURSE, THESE 'SIGNS' ARE JUST THE NATURAL RESULTS OF DECOMPOSITION. BUT SOME 'VAMPIRES' GAVE *OTHER* INDICATIONS OF THEIR EVIL NATURE."



"ANY CORPSE THAT SHOWED NO SIGNS OF DECOMPOSITION WAS OBVIOUSLY UNNATURAL AND WAS THEREFORE *ALSO* A VAMPIRE!"



"WHEN IT CAME TO DECOMPOSING, YOU WERE QUITE LITERALLY DAMNED IF YOU DID AND DAMNED IF YOU DIDN'T!"

"AND THAT, MY FRIENDS, IS THE TRUTH ABOUT VAMPIRES."



CHAPTER EIGHT

DEAD ISSUES

AND CULTURE CUSTOMS

Different cultures have different views of death. Whatever is familiar to us seems correct, while unfamiliar beliefs seem outlandish and bizarre. We may find it curious that another culture believes in zombies (*page 184*), but some of our own customs are just as strange. Many people are unaware that the nursery rhymes they teach their children have macabre hidden meanings (*page 189*), or that games and sports that are perfectly safe in the U.S. commonly lead to death in other countries (*page 186*). The anthropology of death also includes various beliefs about life after death, heaven (*page 195*) and hell (*page 198*). When it comes to death, there is no absolute right or wrong opinion — at least, none that anyone living knows for sure.





BUT OF COURSE! YOU SEE, I HAVE HERE THE ZOMBIE POWDER, MADE FROM THE SKIN OF THE PUFFER FISH.

AH, YES...THE PUFFER FISH'S SKIN CONTAINS HIGH LEVELS OF TETRODOTOXIN...

...IT'S ABSOLUTELY LETHAL IF TAKEN ORALLY.



BUT WHEN I RUB THE POWDER LIGHTLY INTO THE SKIN -VOILÀ!

I IMAGINE THE RESULTING PARALYSIS WILL RESEMBLE DEATH.



YOU KNOW MANY THINGS, DOCTOR. NOW HIS FAMILY WILL COME FOR HIM.

NO RESPONSE TO STIMULI OF ANY KIND...



THIS IS FABULOUS! NOW I ACTUALLY GET TO OBSERVE A TRADITIONAL FUNERAL SERVICE!

GO IF YOU WISH - BUT MY WORK BEGINS LATER...



THAT NIGHT

NOW WE RETRIEVE OUR FRIEND...

...AND THEN YOU'LL RESTORE HIM TO LIFE! FANTASTIC!



I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HOW YOU'LL DO IT! I IMAGINE THERE'S SOME SORT OF CEREMONY INVOLVED.

YES, BUT YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO OBSERVE IT.



THE BIRTH OF THE ZOMBIE IS THE MOST SOLEMN RITE OF VODUN.

BUT I MUST LEARN THE ENTIRE PROCESS! I MUST SEE THE CEREMONY!

ARE YOU SURE!

YES! YES!

AND SO, YOU SEE, HE DID...



...IN THE END.

YOUR TEA, MASTER!





ISN'T THAT GROSS? AND HOW ABOUT THE AIRPLANE CARRYING THE WHOLE ZAMBIAN NATIONAL SOCCER TEAM THAT CRASHED IN THE ATLANTIC OCEAN? THEY WERE ALL KILLED, AND I MIGHT'VE BEEN THINKING OF THAT TOO, Y'KNOW?



PLUS, THERE'S THOSE SOCCER RIOTS WHERE THE FANS GET KILLED.



"LIKE WHEN PERU PLAYED ARGENTINA TO QUALIFY FOR THE 1966 OLYMPICS, AND THE CROWD RIOTED IN THE STREETS AND 248 PEOPLE GOT KILLED."



"OR A REALLY GREAT ONE WAS IN URUGUAY IN 1972-- WHEN ONE TEAM WAS ABOUT TO SCORE, THE FANS OF THE OTHER TEAM STARTED SHOOTING AT THE PLAYERS--"



"-- AND KILLED TWO OF THEM!"

"AND 53 PEOPLE DIED IN A FIRE AT A SOCCER MATCH IN BEDFORD, ENGLAND IN 1985."



"OR WHAT ABOUT THAT OTHER ENGLISH SOCCER MATCH, WHEN THE FANS GOT SQUASHED THROUGH A CYCLONE FENCE AND 93 OF THEM DIED?"



SO, WHERE DO YOU WANNA EAT?

LOOK, UN... I DON'T REALLY FEEL TOO GOOD, Y'KNOW? I THINK I'M JUST GONNA GO HOME. YOU WANT A RIDE?



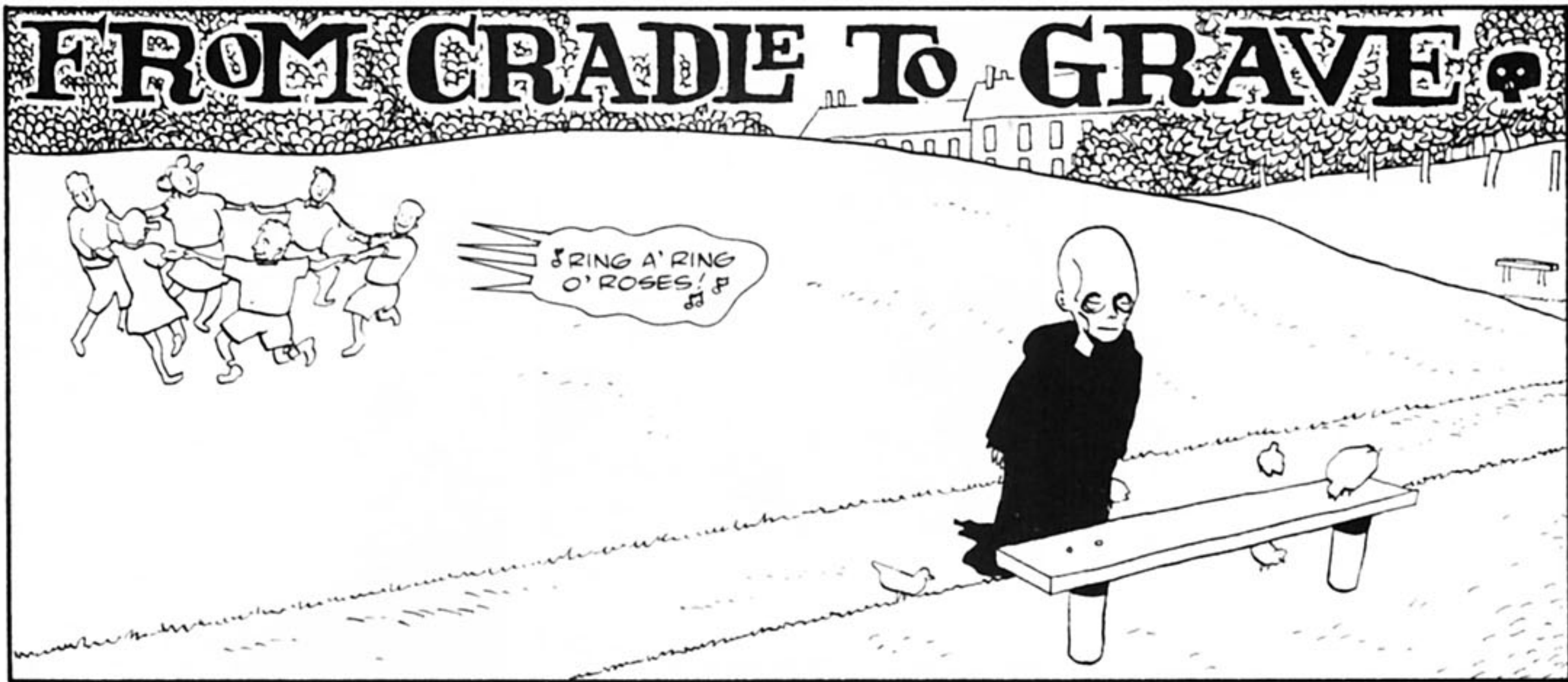
OH, NO, THAT'S OKAY, I'VE GOT A LOT OF SHOPPING TO DO AND STUFF. THANKS ANYWAY.

YEAH, YEAH, OKAY. WELL, UN, I'LL CALL YOU. 'BYE.



I DON'T GET IT-- I THOUGHT BOYS LIKED TO TALK ABOUT SPORTS!







"THEY WOULD GIVE THE WATER SPIRITS A HUMAN SACRIFICE IN EXCHANGE FOR EVERY BRIDGE THEY BUILT."



SO WHEN YOUR FRIENDS SING, "MY FAIR LADY..."



"THEY'RE SINGING ABOUT THE HUMAN SACRIFICE THAT KEEPS THE BRIDGE FROM FALLING DOWN!"



AND WHEN THEY SAY, "TAKE THE KEY AND LOCK HER UP..."



"...THAT MEANS THAT SOMETIMES THEY PUT THE SACRIFICE INTO THE FOUNDATION OF THE BRIDGE ITSELF."



TELL ME ANOTHER ONE!



OKAY, LET'S SAY YOUR FAVORITE.

"HERE COMES A CANDLE TO LIGHT YOU TO BED..."



"HERE COMES A CHOPPER..."



"...TO CHOP OFF YOUR HEAD!"

THERE, THAT'S THE BEST ONE! NOW GO PLAY WITH THE CHILDREN!

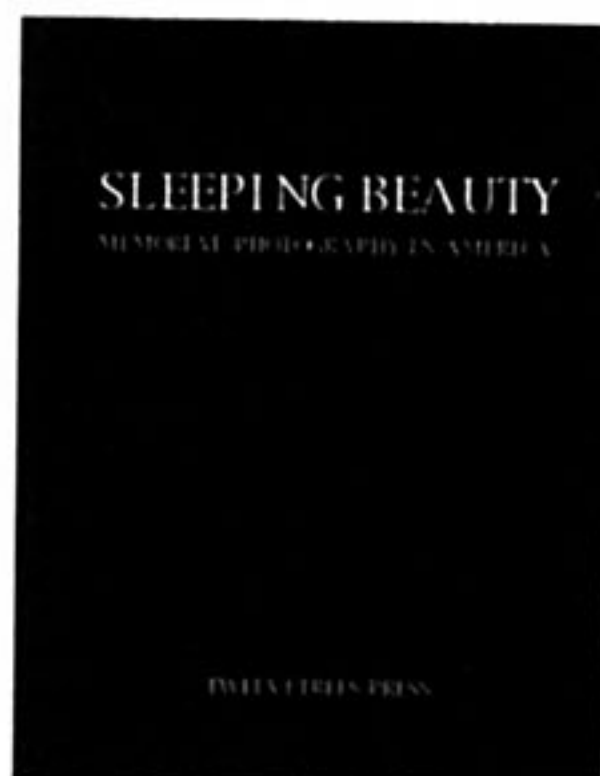


OKAY, DADDY! DADDY, I LIKE NURSERY RHYMES!

MEMORIAL PHOTOGRAPHS OF CHILDREN WERE ESPECIALLY TREASURED. OFTEN, THEY WERE THE ONLY TANGIBLE EVIDENCE THAT THE CHILD HAD EVER EXISTED.



SOME OF THE POSTMORTEM PHOTOS IN THE COLLECTION OF STANLEY B. BURNS, M.D. HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED BY TWELVETREES PRESS IN AN ELEGANT BOOK CALLED SLEEPING BEAUTY.



BEFORE PHOTOGRAPHY, IMPORTANT PEOPLE WERE COMMEMORATED BY DEATH MASKS — A PLASTER CAST OF THE ACTUAL FACE OF THE FAMOUS CORPSE.



OLIVER CROMWELL'S DEATH MASK

FOR THE FUNERALS OF ENGLISH ROYALTY, LIFE-LIKE EFFIGIES OF THE ENTIRE BODY WOULD BE CREATED FROM WOOD, PLASTER, LEATHER AND WAX.



AT THE SAME TIME, MEMENTOS OF DEAD FRIENDS AND FAMILY WERE ALSO POPULAR. MOURNING RINGS SOMETIMES CONTAINED A LOCK OF THE DECEASED'S HAIR.

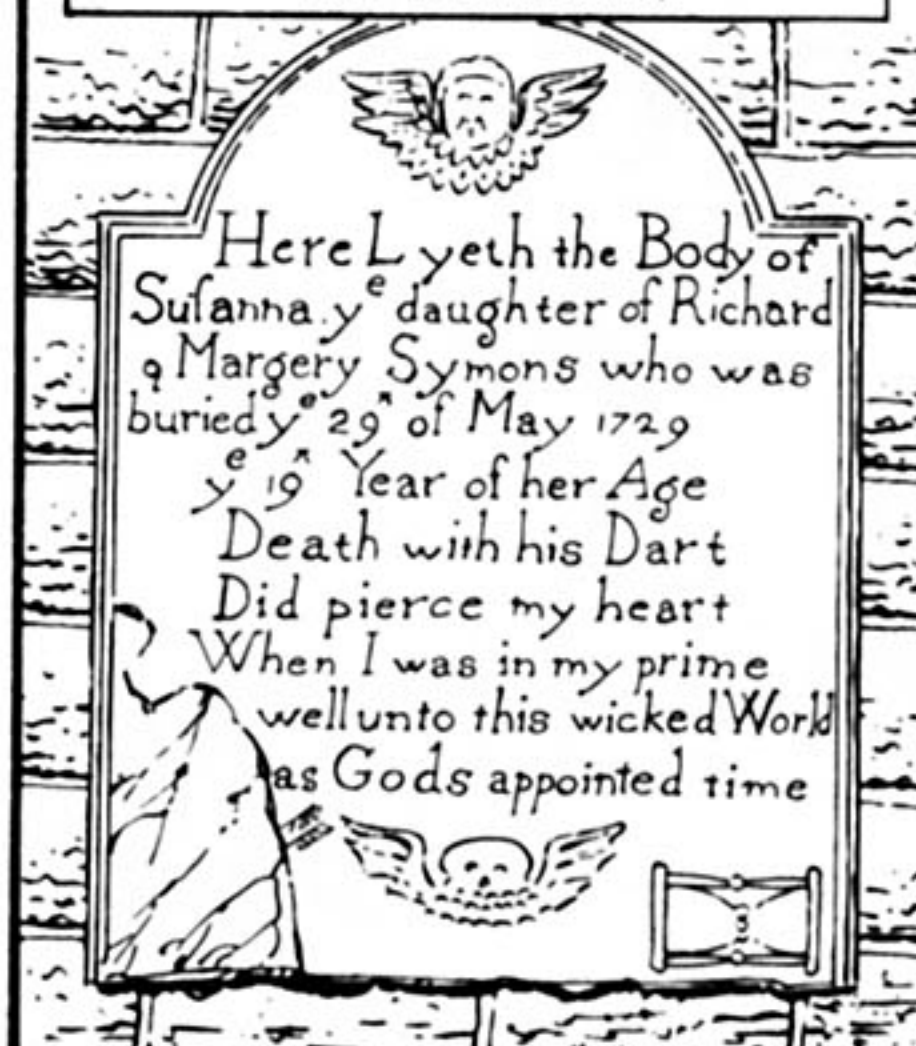
MAKING DECORATIVE OBJECTS FROM DEAD PEOPLE'S HAIR WAS CONSIDERED A PROPER HANDICRAFT FOR YOUNG LADIES IN VICTORIAN TIMES.



BUT BY FAR THE MOST UNIVERSAL TYPE OF COMMEMORATIVE ART IS THE MEMORIAL MONUMENT OR TOMBSTONE.



AS CONCEPTS OF DEATH HAVE CHANGED OVER THE PAST 300 YEARS, SO HAVE THE SYMBOLS OF DEATH USED ON GRAVESTONES.





EARLY SYMBOLS OF DEATH INCLUDED THE HOURGLASS, THE SCYTHE, THE COFFIN, THE SKULL AND CROSSBONES, AND —WHO KNOWS WHY?— THE WINGED HEAD.

MODERN SYMBOLS OF DEATH ON TOMBSTONES INCLUDE DEER HEADS...



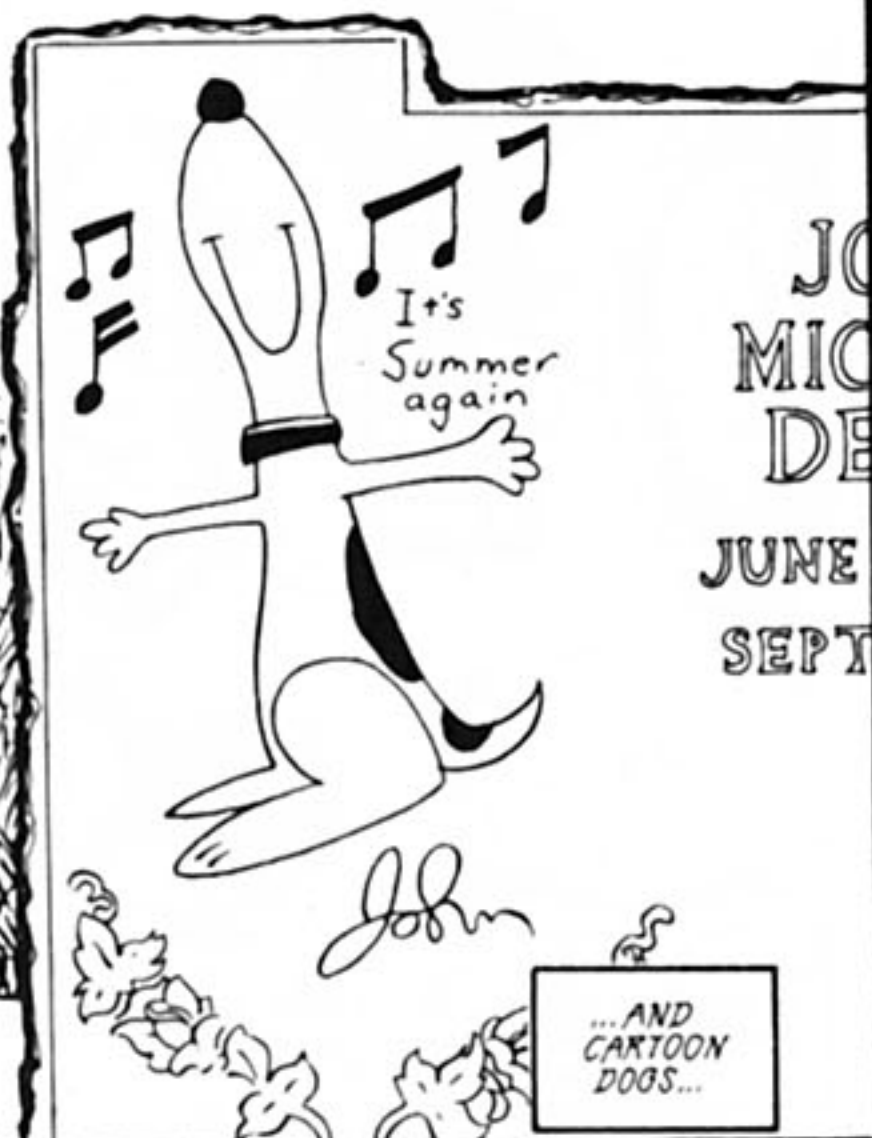
THE LAST HUNT

JOHN RICH

APP.
NOV.



... BOWLING PINS...



...AND
CARTOON
DOGS...

THESE AND MANY OTHER FINE, FINE EXAMPLES OF MODERN GRAVESTONES PHOTOGRAPHED BY LUCINDA RUNNEN AND VIRGINIA WARREN SMITH ARE IN THE APERTURE BOOK SCORING IN HEAVEN.

SCORING IN HEAVEN

Gravestones and Cemetery Art of the American Sunbelt States



PHOTOGRAPHS BY
LUCINDA RUNNEN & VIRGINIA WARREN SMITH



BUT NOWADAYS, MOST AMERICAN DEATH PARAPHERNALIA IS LESS PERSONAL AND MORE INSTITUTIONALIZED. THERE'S LESS "ART" INVOLVED. COMPARE A MODERN AMERICAN CASKET...

... TO A HAND-CARVED ONE FROM GHANA WHERE EACH CASKET REPRESENTS SOMETHING ABOUT THE PERSON INSIDE. (THIS COFFIN WAS MADE FOR AN ONION FARMER.)



IN MEXICO THEY CELEBRATE THE DAY OF THE DEAD WITH SKELETON TOYS, CANDY SKULLS, AND PICNICS IN THE CEMETERIES.



IN OTHER CULTURES, DEATH IS MORE ARTISTIC --



--AND PROBABLY
A LOT MORE FUN.

HEAVEN AND HELL

HULLO.
WE'RE DEAD. ARE YOU DEAD TOO?
YOU MUST BE DEAD OR YOU
WOULDN'T BE HERE...
...AND YOU MUST HAVE BEEN REALLY
GOOD WHEN YOU WERE ALIVE,
'CAUSE YOU'RE IN HEAVEN NOW.
DID YOU KNOW THIS
WAS HEAVEN?
WELL IT IS...!
HONEST!



WELL,
IT'S
CARTOON
HEAVEN
ANYWAY.



ARE YOU A CARTOON?
YOU DON'T LOOK LIKE A
CARTOON.
THIS IS CARTOON HEAVEN.
DID YOU KNOW THAT
EVERYBODY HAS THEIR
OWN KIND OF HEAVEN?
THEY DO.



WELL...
EXCEPT
BUDDHISTS
DON'T.



WHEN BUDDHISTS DIE,
THEY JUST SEE LIGHT.

FIRST
WHITE
MOON-
LIGHT...

THEN
RED
SUN-
LIGHT...

AND
THEN
DARK-
NESS

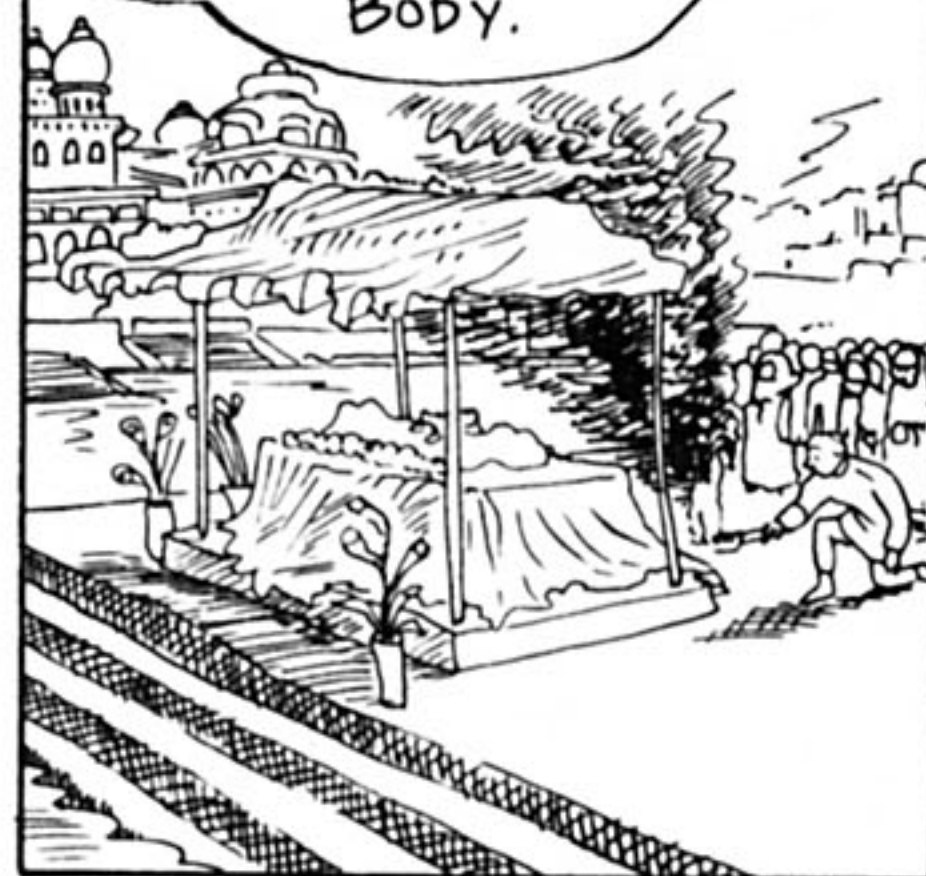
FINALLY THEY GET TO
SEE THE DAWN.
THEY CALL THAT THE
'CLEAR LIGHT OF DEATH.'
THEN AFTER 49 DAYS
THEY GET REBORN IN
A NEW BODY...



...SO THEY NEVER GET TO
GO TO HEAVEN AT ALL.
DO YOU THINK IT
WOULD BE FUN TO
HAVE A NEW BODY?
HINDUS GET TO HAVE
NEW BODIES TOO.



WHEN A HINDU DIES,
THE OLD BODY GETS
CREMATED IN A
SPECIAL RITUAL,
AND THEN THEY
GET A NEW
BODY.



EXCEPT SOMETIMES THEY GET TO BE ONE WITH THE UNIVERSAL SOUL CALLED **BRAHMAN**,... AND THEN THEY GET LIBERATED AND THEY DON'T GET BORN ANYMORE.



SO BUDDHISTS SEE LIGHT AND THEN THEY GET A NEW BODY, AND HINDUS GET NEW BODIES UNLESS THEY SEE THE LIGHT. BUT ALL I GOT WAS HEAVEN.



HEAVEN IS PRETTY MUCH CHRISTIAN, EXCEPT FOR ISLAMIC PARADISE AND JEWISH SHE'OL. I DON'T KNOW IF SHE'OL IS EXACTLY HEAVEN, BUT IT'S KINDA CLOSE...



SEE?
IT'S RIGHT OVER THERE.



IT'S THE JEWISH NETHERWORLD, WHERE EVERYBODY WAITS FOR THE MESSIAH TO COME AND THEN THEY'LL ALL GET RESURRECTED.



SO INSTEAD OF GETTING NEW BODIES, THEY GET THEIR OLD BODIES BACK. WOULD YOU RATHER HAVE A NEW BODY OR AN OLD BODY? I'D WANT A NEW BODY IF IT WERE BETTER, BUT I LIKE MY OLD ONE FINE.



I THINK SHE'OL MUST BE KIND OF LIKE LIMBO. LIMBO'S OVER THERE- IT'S A CATHOLIC PLACE, BUT MOSTLY NON-CATHOLICS GO THERE.



LIMBO'S GOT MOSTLY UNBAPTIZED BABIES AND PEOPLE WHO DIED BEFORE JESUS WAS BORN. EVERYBODY JUST SORT OF FLOATS AROUND, WAITING.



PURGATORY'S RIGHT NEXT DOOR TO LIMBO, BECAUSE IT'S CATHOLIC TOO. IT'S LIKE JAIL FOR THE SOULS OF SINNERS.



SOULS GO TO PURGATORY IF THEY'RE TOO BAD FOR HEAVEN AND TOO GOOD FOR HELL. THEY STAY THERE UNTIL THEY'VE SUFFERED ENOUGH TO BE **PURGED** OF THEIR SINS, AND THEN THEY GO TO HEAVEN.



THAT'S CATHOLIC HEAVEN OVER THERE. IN CATHOLIC HEAVEN YOU'RE ONE WITH GOD AND YOU DON'T NEED ANYTHING ELSE TO BE HAPPY... SO THAT'S ALL THERE IS.



PROTESTANTS DON'T HAVE LIMBO OR PURGATORY, BUT THEY HAVE ALL KINDS OF HEAVENS. THEY HAVE ONES WHERE PEOPLE ARE JUST WAITING FOR BODILY RESURRECTION...



...AND ONES WHERE THEY HAVE AN AFTERLIFE WITH GOD, AND ONES THAT WILL BE MOVING TO EARTH AFTER THE APOCALYPSE. BUT THE **NICEST HEAVEN IS...**



...ISLAMIC HEAVEN! WHEN GOOD MUSLIMS DIE, THEY GO TO A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN AND WEAR SILK ROBES AND EAT DELICIOUS FOOD AND HAVE **EVERYTHING** THEY EVER WANTED, AND THEY'RE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD FOREVER.



DOESN'T THAT SOUND NICE? AND THEN THERE'S CARTOON HEAVEN, WHERE IT LOOKS LIKE THIS AND EVERYONE CARRIES HARPS. IT'S KINDA SILLY.



I THINK WHEN YOU DIE WHAT HAPPENS TO YOU IS WHATEVER YOU **THOUGHT** WOULD HAPPEN TO YOU, AND THAT'S WHY THERE'S DIFFERENT KINDS OF HEAVEN.



MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE BEEN A MUSLIM INSTEAD OF A CARTOON!



DANTE GOES TO HELL



MIDWAY IN LIFE,
I REALIZED I'D STRAYED/
FROM THE STRAIGHT-AND-NARROW
INTO A GLOOMY WOOD./
I WAS ALONE, AND I WAS SORE
DISMAYED...



REMEMBER THOSE CLASSIC
OPENING LINES FROM MY
"INFERNO"? BRINGS BACK
MEMORIES, DOESN'T IT?

GEE, I LOVE
VISITING THE OLD
NEIGHBORHOOD!



SEE, HERE'S THE ENTRANCE, YOU
CAN'T MISS IT. COMES COMPLETE
WITH THAT FAMOUS INSCRIPTION:
"ABANDON HOPE, ALL YE
WHO ENTER HERE."

AND
JUST BEYOND IT
IS AVERNUS CAVERN—
THE ENTRANCE TO HELL!



YOU KNOW,
IT WAS THE
ROMAN POET VIRGIL
WHO FIRST MAPPED
THIS PLACE OUT, IN HIS
EPIC, *THE AENEID*.



HERE'S HOW IT LOOKED
THEN. OF COURSE, THAT
WAS A LONG TIME AGO;
A LOT HAS CHANGED.



THE UNDERGROUND RIVERS
ARE STILL HERE, THOUGH—
ACHERON, LETHE, THE STYX.
AND YOU STILL HAVE TO CROSS
WITH CHARON THE BOATMAN.



CHARON TAKES ALL THE DEAD SOULS ACROSS --ALWAYS HAS, ALWAYS WILL. HE'S BEEN HERE AT LEAST SINCE CLASSICAL GREECE, WHEN THIS PLACE WAS CALLED HADES.



BUT IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW FAR BACK YOU GO, HELL HAS ALWAYS HAD A BOATMAN AND A RIVER, A MOUNTAIN, SOME GATES AND GUARDIANS...



"GILGAMESH, A MESOPOTAMIAN EPIC FROM 4,000 YEARS AGO, DESCRIBES THE UNDERWORLD THAT WAY. EVERYONE WHO DIED WENT TO THE SAME PLACE...

"...AND IT WASN'T VERY NICE!"



"3,000 YEARS AGO, IN EGYPT, ONLY THE NOBILITY GOT TO HAVE AN AFTERLIFE. THEY WERE FERRIED ACROSS THE RIVER OF THE SKY TO GET THERE.



"WHEN THE GREEKS TOOK OVER, HADES REALLY GOT BUSY. THE REALM OF THE DEAD WAS FULL OF GODS, DEMONS, AND CELEBRITIES. **EVERYONE** WENT THERE, BUT ONLY THE WICKED STAYED IN HADES TO BE PUNISHED.



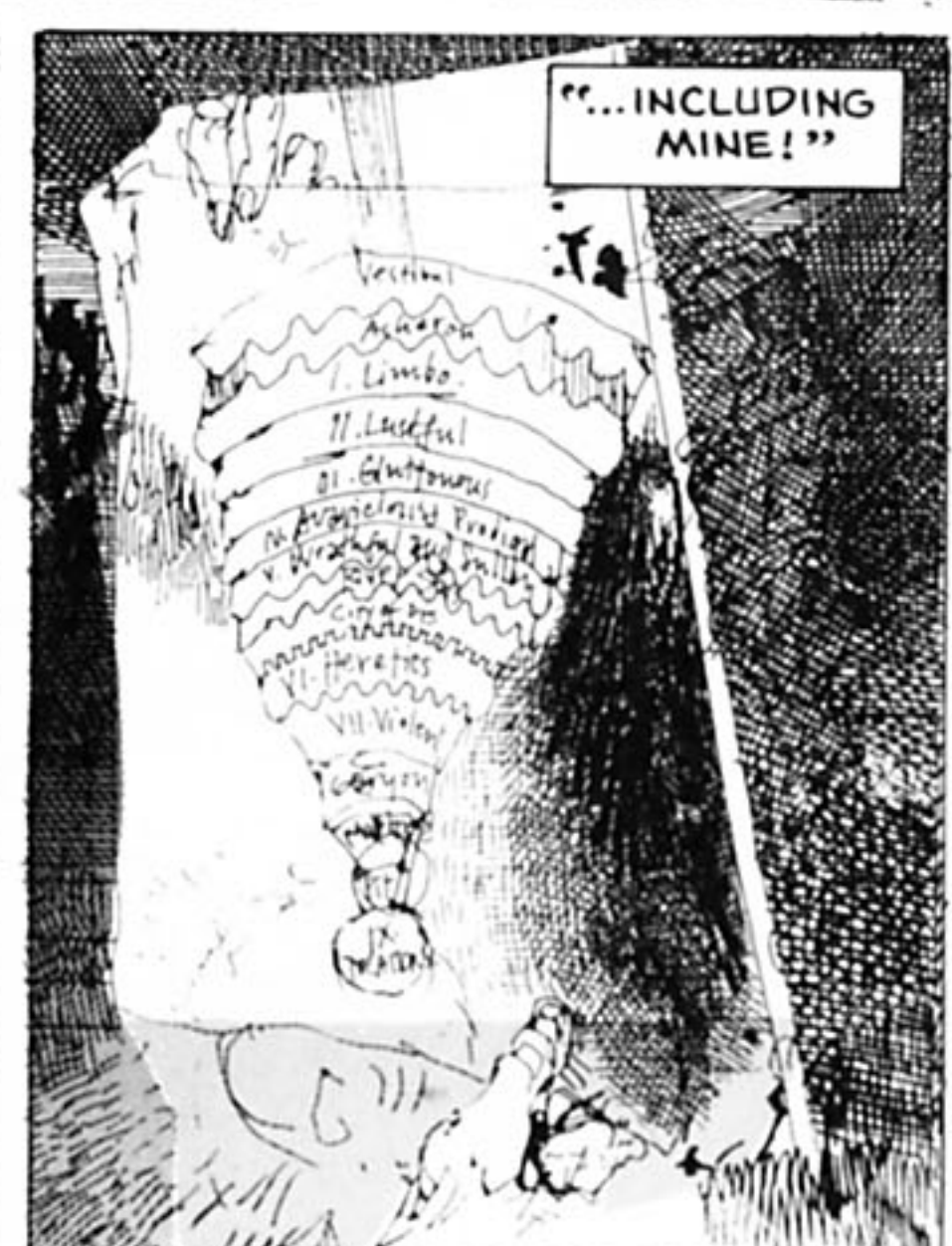
"THE JEWS WERE THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T HAVE A PROPER HELL. ALL THEY HAD WAS THE GRAVE.

"EVERYBODY WENT *THERE*, TOO, BUT IT WAS RATHER BORING.



"VIRGIL PLOTTED HIS LAND OF THE DEAD BASED ON THE GREEKS' DESCRIPTIONS.

"HE HAD A BIG INFLUENCE ON THE CHRISTIAN VERSION OF HELL...



"...INCLUDING MINE!"



"I'LL NEVER FORGET THE FIRST TIME I SAW THIS PLACE. VIRGIL GUIDED ME, AND I WROTE IT ALL DOWN--THE SEVEN CIRCLES, THE PUNISHMENTS, CERBERUS THE THREE-HEADED GUARD DOG-- EVERYTHING!"



THE FUNNY THING IS, THERE ISN'T MUCH MENTION OF HELL IN THE BIBLE-- JUST ONCE IN MARK, AND A FEW TIMES IN MATTHEW.



"BUT FOR HUNDREDS OF YEARS, THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH STRESSED THAT ONE OF THE GREATEST PLEASURES OF HEAVEN...



"...WAS THAT YOU GOT TO WATCH THE TORTURES OF THE DAMNED IN HELL!"



THEY DON'T DO THAT SO MUCH NOWADAYS, OF COURSE, BUT STILL--WITH ALL THE PEOPLE WHO ARE DOWN HERE NOW...



...IT'S A LOT MORE INTERESTING THAN HEAVEN!

CHAPTER NINE

IS THAT ALL THERE IS?

BEYOND DEATH

This is it — the crux of the Big Mystery: What happens after death? People have searched for the Answer in many different ways — they’ve tried to communicate with the spirits of the deceased (*page 211*), they’ve studied the last words of accomplished persons (*page 205*), and they’ve researched the experiences of people who have “come back to life” after being clinically dead (*page 202*). After all that, they — and we — remain clueless. And so we leave you with the consolation of philosophy, some words from Michel de Montaigne — essayist, Frenchman, and pretty good guy.

Have a nice life.

SOMETIMES PEOPLE START OFF FOR THE CEMETERY AND DON'T QUITE MAKE IT. THEY ALMOST DIE, AND THEN THEY COME BACK. THEY'RE THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE ...

NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCES



THE PEOPLE WHO STUDY THESE EVENTS -- THEY CALL THEM "NDE'S" -- HAVE FOUND SOME COMMON ELEMENTS.

**HONK!
HONK!**

OMIGOD!
THAT KID—
CAN'T STOP—!



FIRST, OF COURSE, YOU HAVE TO BE CLINICALLY DEAD.

WHOMMP

LIKE
SO.



THEN YOU FEEL YOURSELF FLOATING. YOU CAN SEE YOUR BODY DOWN BELOW, BUT THERE'S NO PAIN.

YOUR
VISION
IS CLEAR,
YOUR
MIND IS
FOCUSED...



... AND THEN,
JUST AS THINGS
GET INTERESTING,
YOU'RE SUCKED INTO
THIS BLACK TUNNEL!

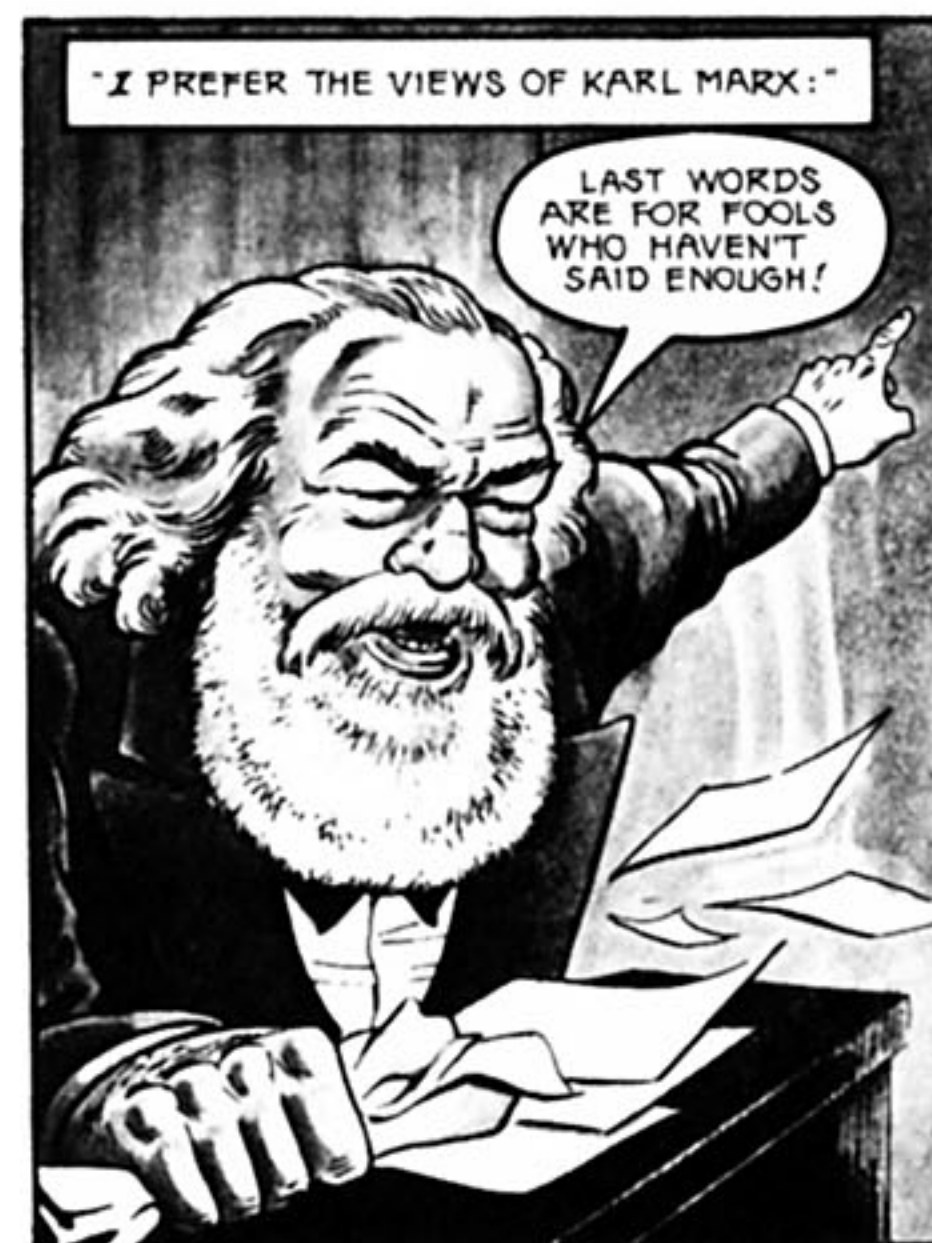


AND YOU
GO SHOOTING
THROUGH THE
BLACKNESS,
HEADING
TOWARD A
BLINDING
LIGHT!











PRETTY PRAGMATIC—FOR A ROMANTIC. BUT THE KING OF PRAGMATISM WAS THE AMERICAN KILLER GARY GILMORE, SENTENCED TO DEATH BY FIRING SQUAD. HIS LAST WORDS:



LET'S DO IT!



"AND WHO CAN ARGUE WITH THE LAST WORDS OF THE MURDERER JIMMY GLASS, AS HE SAT IN LOUISIANA'S ELECTRIC CHAIR?"

I'D RATHER BE FISHING.



"I CAN THINK OF ONE OTHER TIME WHERE LAST WORDS GAVE A PRETTY GOOD IDEA OF A PERSON'S LIFE—CIVIL WAR GENERAL JOHN SEDGWICK."



GENERAL, SIR, I BELIEVE YOU SHOULD TAKE COVER—THE ENEMY IS FIRING AT US!

NONSENSE! THEY COULD NOT HIT AN ELEPHANT AT THIS DIST--



"YES, THOSE LAST WORDS TELL YOU *SOMETHING* ABOUT GENERAL SEDGWICK!"

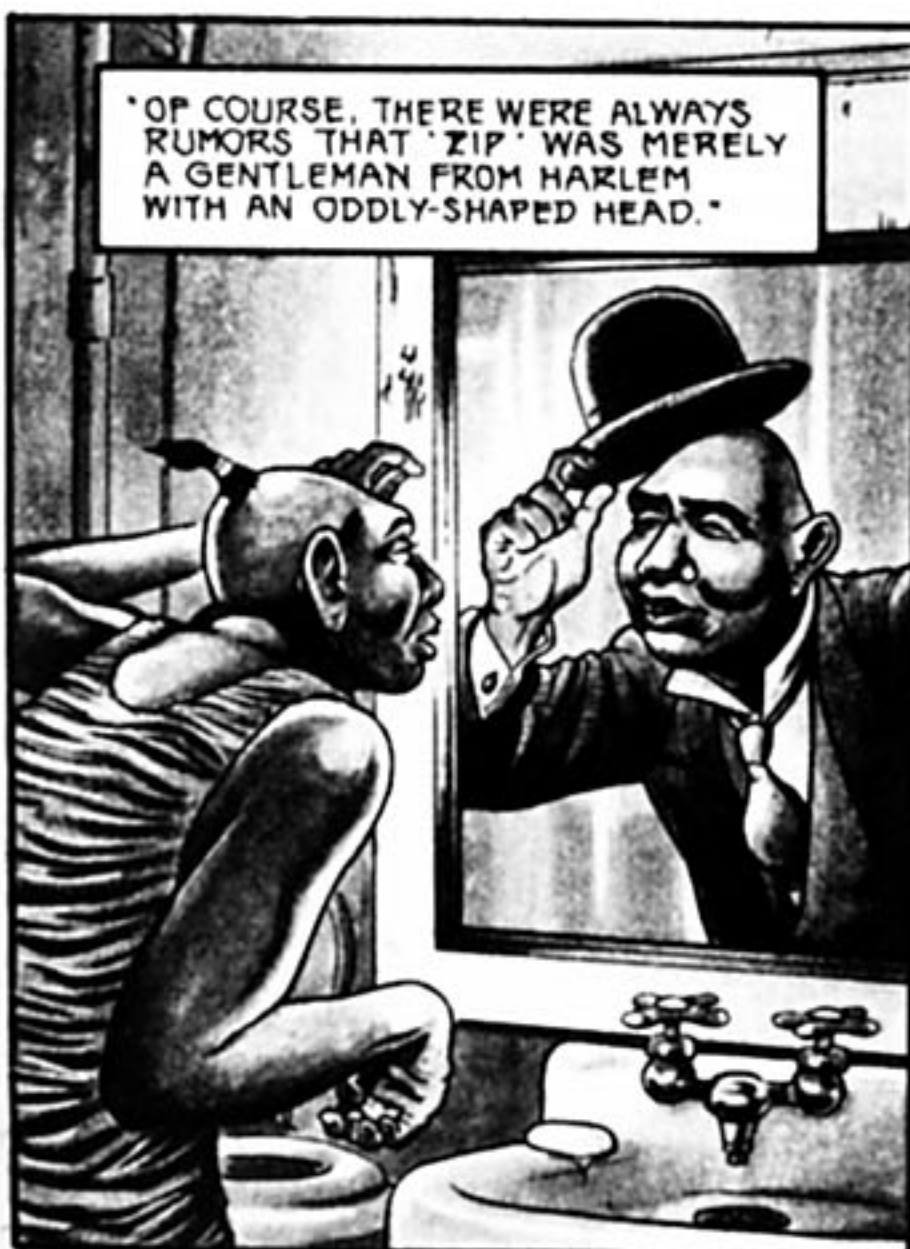
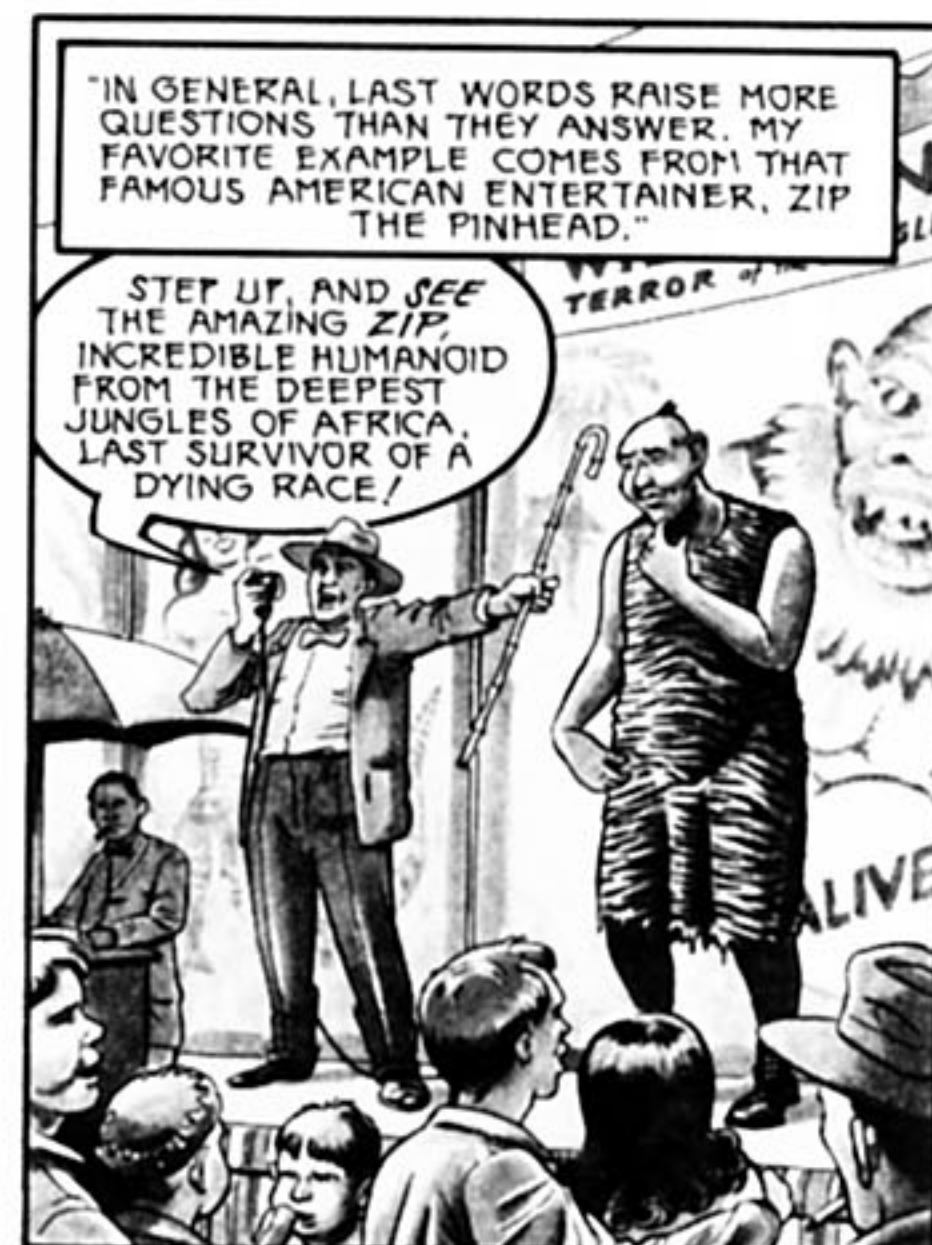


"I DON'T BELIEVE LAST WORDS ARE SPECIAL, BUT THERE ARE SOME I'M ESPECIALLY FOND OF—THOSE OF THE COMTESSE DE VERCELLES, FOR INSTANCE."



"AN ELEGANT NOBLEWOMAN OF PRE-REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE, THE COMTESSE WAS ON HER DEATHBED WHEN SHE COMMITTED AN UNPARDONABLE *FALX PAS*..."





NEWARK CITY HOSPITAL,
OCTOBER 24, 1935.
NOTES FROM THE FINAL
INTERROGATION OF
ARTHUR FLEGENHEIMER,
ALSO KNOWN AS...



THE LAST WORDS of Dutch Schultz



EARLIER IN THE EVENING, DUTCH MET
SOME ASSOCIATES AT THE PALACE
CHOP HOUSE TO DISCUSS BUSINESS—
BOOTLEGGING, THE POLICY RACKET,
AND SO ON.



WHEN DUTCH MADE A QUICK
TRIP TO THE MEN'S ROOM...



...A HITMAN BURST IN AND SHOT A
.45 SLUG THROUGH HIS INTESTINE,
GALL BLADDER, AND LIVER.



DUTCH WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL,
FILLED FULL OF MORPHINE, GIVEN
LAST RITES, AND QUESTIONED BY
DETECTIVES.

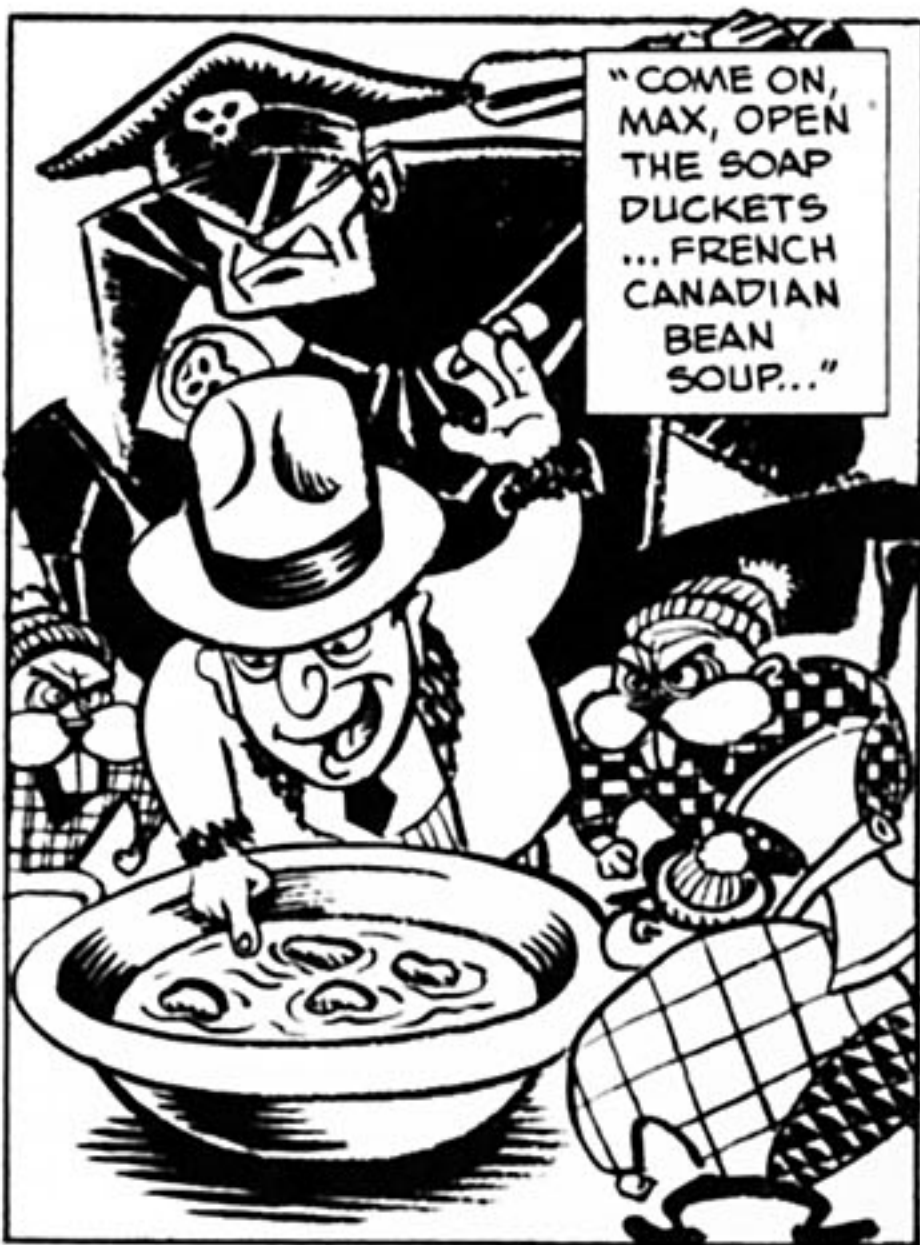


THE POLICEMAN WHO RECORDED THE
INTERROGATION DOCUMENTED TWO
HOURS' WORTH OF THE STRANGEST
LAST WORDS OF ALL TIME.



GEORGE, DON'T
MAKE NO BULL
MOVES...

YOU GET
AHEAD WITH THE
DOT AND DASH
SYSTEM.





THROUGHOUT HISTORY, CERTAIN PEOPLE --SHAMANS, PAGAN PRIESTESSES, NECROMANCERS-- HAVE ATTEMPTED TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD.



IT WASN'T UNTIL THE RISE OF SPIRITUALISM IN 19TH-CENTURY AMERICA THAT SPEAKING TO DEAD PEOPLE BECAME A MIDDLE-CLASS PARLOR TRICK.



SPIRITUALISM BEGAN IN 1848 WITH MARGARET AND CATHERINE (KATE) FOX, TWO SISTERS WHO CLAIMED THAT SPIRITS OF THE DEAD COMMUNICATED WITH THEM THROUGH RAPPING OR KNOCKING SOUNDS.



THE SPIRITS' MESSAGES WERE REMARKABLY SIMILAR TO THE BELIEFS OF THE FOX GIRLS' QUAKER FAMILY AND FRIENDS.

QUESTION THREE--
SHOULD SLAVERY
BE ABOLISHED?



ONE RAP!
THAT'S A YES!



SPIRITUALISM QUICKLY BECAME MORE FORMALIZED, WITH LEADERS CALLED "MEDIUMS" AND MEETINGS CALLED "SEANCES".



BY THE 1860s, IT WAS THE FASTEST-GROWING RELIGION IN AMERICA.

OF COURSE, THE SPIRITS WEREN'T CONTENT TO JUST KEEP RAPPING. SOON THEY WERE TALKING, BLOWING TRUMPETS, AND APPEARING AS "ECTOPLASM" FROM THE MOUTHS OF MEDIUMS.



EVENTUALLY, MOST OF THE MORE SPECTACULAR "COMMUNICATIONS" WERE SHOWN TO BE FRAUDULENT.

FINALLY, EVEN MARGARET FOX 'FESSED UP.

I REGRET TO SAY THAT THE RAPPING SOUNDS WERE THE RESULT OF THE CRACKING OF THE JOINTS OF OUR LARGE TOES.



THESE REVELATIONS SLOWED THE GROWTH OF SPIRITUALISM, BUT FAILED TO KILL IT ENTIRELY. IN THE 1920s THE FAMOUS MAGICIAN HARRY HOUDINI WROTE A BOOK ON DETECTING SPIRITUALIST FRAUDS.



NEVERTHELESS, HOUDINI CONTINUED HIS EFFORTS TO LEGITIMATELY COMMUNICATE WITH THE DEAD. PRIOR TO HIS OWN DEATH, HE ARRANGED A SECRET SIGNAL WITH HIS WIFE.



EVERY OCTOBER 31, MRS. HOUDINI WOULD ATTEMPT TO CONTACT HER HUSBAND -- AN ANNUAL RITE SHE CONTINUED UNTIL HER OWN DEATH.



PERHAPS THE SPIRITUALISM CRAZE DEVELOPED PARTLY IN THE QUEST FOR A WAY TO COMMUNICATE WITH THE NOT-QUITE DEAD. DURING THE 1800S THERE WAS A GENERAL FEAR OF "PREMATURE BURIAL".



ONE ELABORATE DEVICE, INVENTED BY THE RUSSIAN COUNT KARNICE-KARNICKE, WAS TRIGGERED BY EVEN A SINGLE BREATH FROM A PERSON MISTAKENLY BURIED ALIVE.



A FLAG WAS RAISED, A BELL RANG, A LIGHT FLASHED, AND A BOX OPENED TO LET AIR INTO THE COFFIN AND TO ALLOW THE PERSON TO SPEAK.



EVEN WITH SUCH ELABORATE PRECAUTIONS, LIVING PEOPLE WERE OCCASIONALLY INTERRED.



HOW HORRID! WHAT DO YOU SUPPOSE IT IS? SOME PRACTICAL JOKE, I SUSPECT.



IN THOSE DAYS IT WAS OFTEN DIFFICULT TO TELL IF SOMEONE WAS TRULY DEAD OR MERELY COMATOSE. DOCTORS HAD TO RELY ON FAINT SIGNS OF BREATHING OR THE ABSENCE OF PAIN TO DIAGNOSE DEATH.



EVEN NOW, WITH THE MOST MODERN EQUIPMENT, IT'S NOT ALWAYS POSSIBLE TO SAY FOR SURE. TAKE THE CASE OF MILDRED CLARKE OF ALBANY, NEW YORK.



IN 1994 THE ELDERLY MS. CLARKE WAS FOUND ON THE FLOOR OF HER APARTMENT-BLUE, COLD, STIFF, AND UNCONSCIOUS.



EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIANS AND THE COUNTY CORONER PRONOUNCED HER DEAD.

SHE WAS TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL MORGUE AND PLACED IN THE 40-DEGREE COOLER, WHERE SHE STAYED FOR OVER AN HOUR...



...UNTIL A TECHNICIAN NOTICED SHE WAS BREATHING, AND HAD HER TRANSFERRED TO THE INTENSIVE CARE UNIT.



THE NEXT TIME MS. CLARKE DIED, THE DOCTORS CONFIRMED IT WITH AN EKG.



EVEN ELECTRONIC MONITORS FAILED TO DETECT SIGNS OF LIFE IN VETERINARIAN JERRY MIDDLESWART AFTER HE WAS ELECTROCUTED IN KANSAS IN 1989.



AFTER THE HOSPITAL EMERGENCY TEAM WORKED ON HIM FOR NEARLY AN HOUR, HE WAS OFFICIALLY DEAD FOR 40 MINUTES--UNTIL A NURSE NOTICED HE WAS BREATHING AGAIN.



NOWADAYS, THE MOST COMMON REPORTS OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE DEAD ALSO INVOLVE ELECTRICITY--OR AT LEAST AN ELECTRICAL DEVICE: THE TELEPHONE.



A PERSON RECEIVES A CALL FROM A CLOSE FRIEND OR RELATIVE...



...AND THE CONVERSATION PROCEEDS NORMALLY...



...UNTIL THE PERSON REALIZES THAT THE CALLER HAS RECENTLY DIED.



ELECTRICITY, ELECTRONICS, PHYSICS,
DEATH--



--ALL ARE
MYSTERIOUS
PHENOMENA
TO MOST
PEOPLE.

WHEN HE DIES, DAVID HUGHES OF CO-
RADO SPRINGS HAS ARRANGED TO
BE BURIED WITH HIS LAPTOP COMPUTER,
MODEM, AND CELLULAR PHONE.



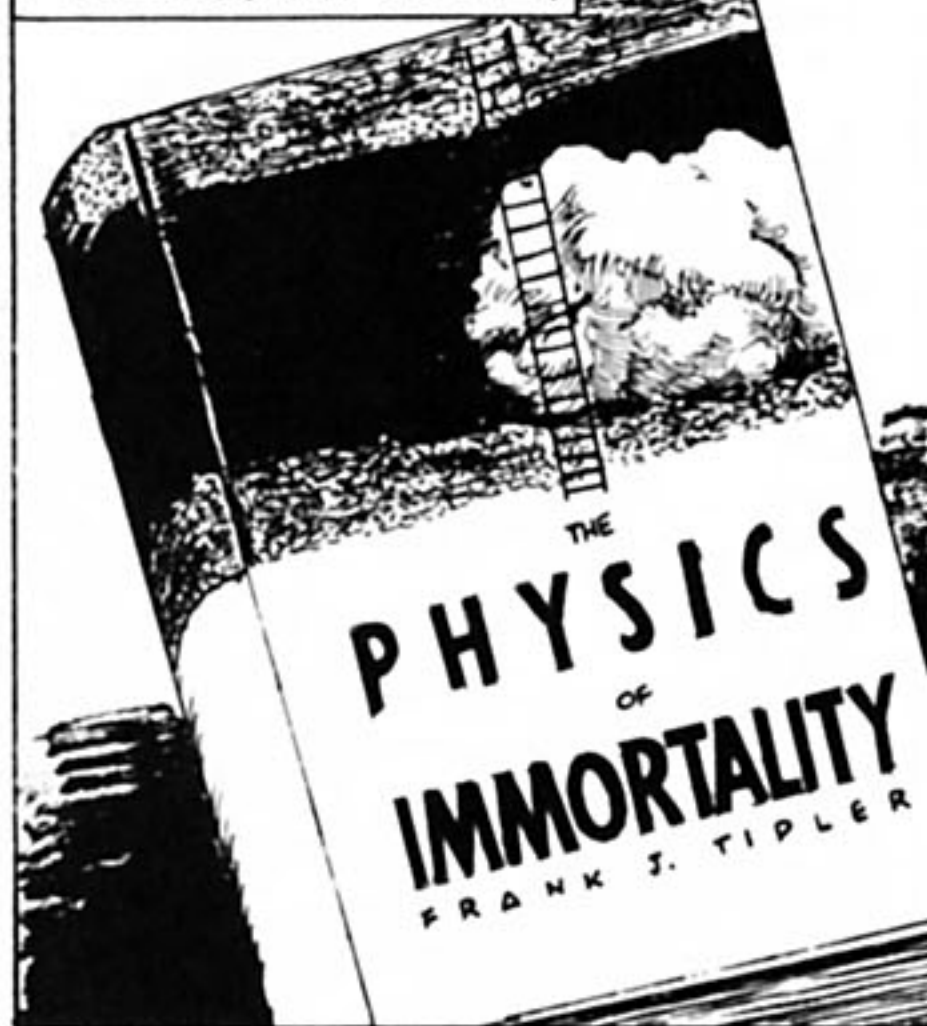
DAVID PLANS TO GO ON-LINE TO THE
INTERNET FROM THE GREAT BEYOND.



ACTUALLY, MODERN PHYSICS DOES
OFFER SOME HOPE FOR SURVIVAL
AFTER DEATH--THROUGH COMPUTERS.



PHYSICIST FRANK TIPLER, A PROFESSOR
AT TULANE UNIVERSITY, HAS RECENTLY
PUBLISHED HIS THEORY.



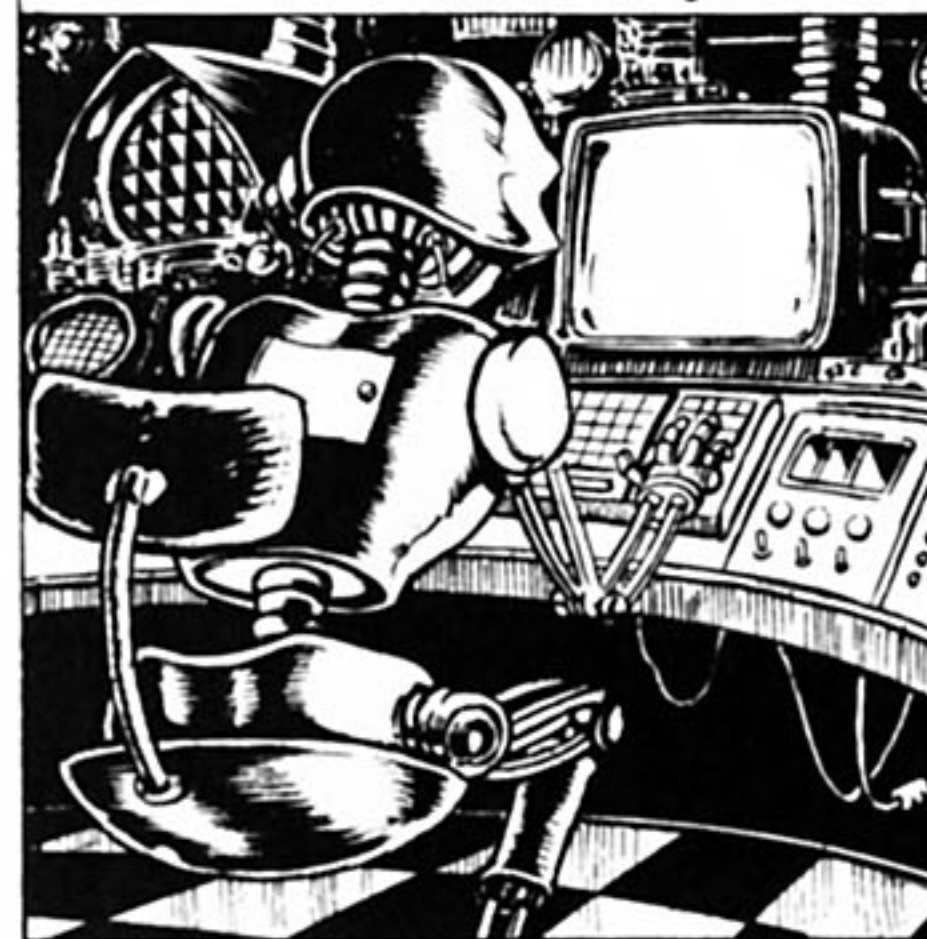
FIRST, ROBOT EXPLORERS WILL COLO-
NIZE THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE.



THEN THEY'LL USE THEIR TECHNOLOG-
ICAL SKILLS TO RECREATE ALL HUMAN
BEINGS AS VIRTUAL HUMANS--EXTREMELY
COMPLEX COMPUTER PROGRAMS REPLI-
CATING INDIVIDUAL BIOCHEMICAL
MACHINES.



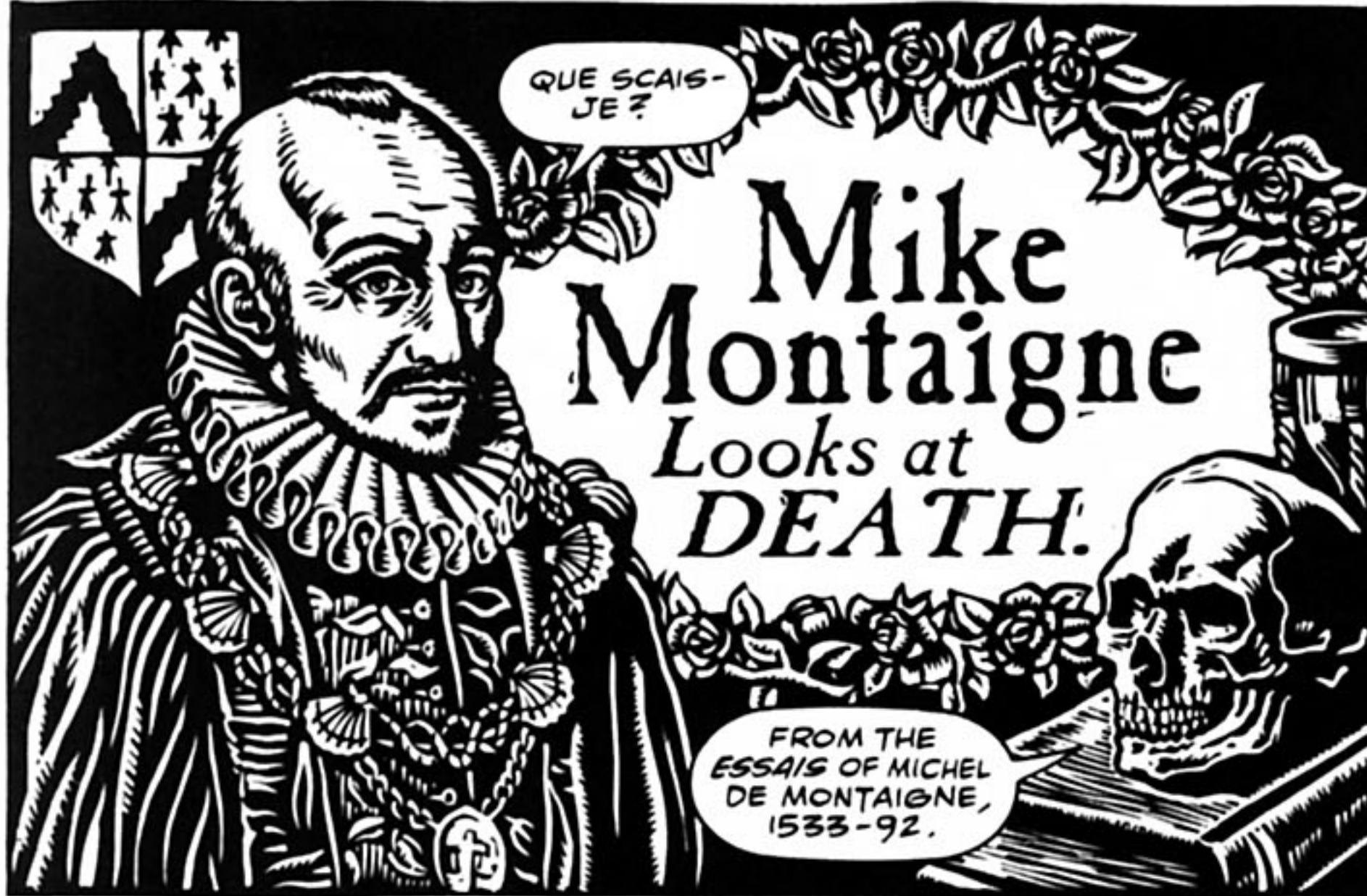
THIS "VIRTUAL RESURRECTION" WILL
SEEM REAL TO ALL THE VIRTUAL HU-
MANS WHO EXPERIENCE IT--BUT IT ISN'T
SCHEDULED TO OCCUR UNTIL A FEW
HUNDRED-THOUSAND YEARS FROM NOW.



UNTIL THEN...



WHAT THE DEAD
HAVE HERE IS
A FAILURE TO
COMMUNICATE!



WRITER

BRONWYN CARLTON

Since 1987 Bronwyn Carlton has been the writer, producer, and host of the *Truckstop Teaparty* radio program (and its most popular feature, "News of the Dead") on WFMU-FM. Formerly a columnist for the *New York Press*, her work has appeared everywhere from big-budget international arts magazines to squatty little European comix. Under an assumed name, she has a really great day job as an editor with a major comic book publisher.

LETTERS

ROD OLLERENSHAW

Rod has a last name that originates in Derby, England and means "Dweller by the Alder Grove." In real life, he dwells in New Jersey.

GAIL BECKETT

Gail is a graphic artist, logo designer, and colorist. She has lettered and colored *Flash Gordon* and *Spider-Man* daily and Sunday strips, books for TSR, Continuity, Dark Horse, Malibu, Penthouse, Marvel, and of course, DC/Paradox.

ARTISTS

NICK ABADZIS

Nick Abadzis (deceased), was the earthly pseudonym of the prophet Moth Rop Pleebus, a herald of the eternal diva goddess, Xa. He is currently listening to a rather fine dub CD. (Page 116)

MARK BADGER

Mark has drawn lots of comics. Along with the coolest cartoonists in the world, his work appears in *Instant Piano*, a comic done just for the fun of it. (Page 71)

GLENN BARR

Glenn's recent projects have included the graphic novels and comics *Cliff's Wild Life*, *Technocracy Blues*, *Mars on Earth*, and *Brooklyn Dreams* for Paradox Press. His animation work includes *Ren and Stimpy* and *Baby Huey*. (Page 36)

RUSSELL BRAUN

Russell died once as a child, but was revived quickly, though some say not completely. Despite this, he can proudly say he draws the best glowing spleen in the business. (Page 165)

STEVE BUCCELLATO

Born in New York City, Steve now draws and colors comics in Venice, California. He is grateful to Paradox Press for providing a reason to deduct his four months in Paris from his taxes. (Page 133)

DAVID CHELSEA

Read David Chelsea's ultra-revealing graphic novel *David Chelsea In Love*. David's next books are *Welcome to the Zone*, from Kitchen Sink, and a book on perspective. (Page 104)

TOMM COKER

Tomm lives in California. This page was drawn while listening to David Bowie, Jane's Addiction, The Beatles, Frank Zappa, Charles Mingus, and Jim Croce. Special thanks to Larry Ross. (Page 96)

MIKE COLLINS

Mike lives in Wales with his wife and three daughters. He's a founding member of O.L.A., a multimedia arts co-operative, and (with David A. Roach) runs *Freakhouse*, a comics and commercial graphics studio. (Page 160)

DONALD DAVID

Donald David was imprisoned in the bowels of a Canadian art school for attempting to prove that comics were a valid medium for self-expression. To this day, he is haunted by the experience. (Page 216)

AL DAVISON

A black belt in karate who performs his own plays, Al Davison lives in London with his lover Maggie. Born paralyzed (spina-bifida), he wasn't expected to live/walk. Life's funny sometimes. (Page 57)

STEVE DILLON

Steve Dillon was born in London in 1962, became a professional comics artist in 1978, and has drawn a lot of stuff since then. (Page 23)

D'ISRAELI D'EMON DRAUGHTSMAN

I live in Sheffield, England with my mummy and a nice kitty. I enjoyed doing this book lots. Please send more pictures of dead babies. (Page 189)

FELIKS DOBRIN

Feliks was born in Kiev, U.S.S.R. in 1962 and came to the United States two years ago. He was the artist of *Welcome Danger*, the first comic ever produced in the Ukraine. (Page 202)

RANDY DuBURKE

All that needs to be said about me was said in my almost best-selling 4200-page autobiography *Leaving A Stain*, published by Put-On Press. I am also the artist on *Hunter's Heart*, a graphic novel in the Paradox Mystery line. (Page 147)

KIERON DWYER

A professional for seven years, Kieron has pencilled, inked, colored and/or painted *Captain America*, *Batman*, *Robin*, *Hellraiser*, and *Lobo*. He is very proud of his work on *The Torch of Liberty*. (Page 40)

DUNCAN EAGLESON

The series of space-time events collectively labeled "Duncan Eagleson" have demonstrated a variety of reproducible results: his work has appeared in *Sandman* and *Shade* (Vertigo), *Storytellers* (Piranha), and *The Witching Hour* (Millennium). (Page 112)

HUNT EMERSON

Hunt Emerson has drawn "underground" comics for twenty years, including Knockabout Comics' *Lady Chatterly's Lover*, *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, and the highly acclaimed *Casanova's Last Stand*. (Page 62)

JOHN ESTES

John Christian Estes is a graduate of the Academy of Art College, San Francisco. Primarily a painter, he's done two graphic novels, *Streets* (DC), and *Tales to Astonish* (Marvel), trading cards, and book covers. (Page 20)

KIRK-ALBERT ETIENNE

Kirk has been pencilling and inking comics for the past few years. He is the artist on *The Project*, an upcoming Paradox Fiction graphic novel. (Page 186)

JIM FERN

Jim started as an inker on various Marvel titles in 1983. He began pencilling in 1987, and has drawn *L.E.G.I.O.N '90*, *Detective*, *Adventures of Superman*, and most recently the *Scarlett* series for DC. (Page 180)

SHARY FLENNIKEN

Shary lives in Seattle, Washington with two dogs, three cats, and a thousand walking sticks (insects). She spends most of her time drinking coffee and taking care of her pets. (Page 195)

RENÉE FRENCH

Renée is the writer/artist of *Grit Bath*, published by Fantagraphics Books. She is currently working on *The Surge* (a graphic novel for Fantagraphics) and "The Ninth Gland," a *Dark Horse Presents* series. (Page 173)

JOHN GARCIA

I've drawn for *Open Space* (Marvel), *Medal of Honor* (Dark Horse) and Jim Vance's *Owlhoots* (Kitchen Sink). My finest work was for Harvey Kurtzman's *New Two-Fisted Tales* (Byron Preiss). (Page 78)

RICK GEARY

Rick's comics and illustrations have appeared in various magazines. His work has been collected in four volumes, including *Housebound with Rick Geary* and *Prairie Moon and Other Stories*. (Page 153)

MICHAEL T. GILBERT

Creator of the cult-classic hero Mr. Monster, Michael also writes and draws scripts for *Batman*, *Donald Duck* and *Cracked*. He and his wife, Janet, live in rainy Eugene, Oregon. (Page 86)

REBECCA GUAY

Rebecca's work has appeared in *Cricket Magazine for Children*, *Topps' Star Wars Series II*, and various Marvel and DC Comics. She is currently the regular penciller for DC/Vertigo's *Black Orchid*. (Page 76)

MIKE HADLEY

Born 1964. English publications include: *Deadline*, *2000 AD*, *Strip*, *Toxic*, *Sonic the Comic*, and *Heartbreak Hotel*. Question: Does Jonathan Frakes actually play the trombone? P.S. Thanks, Jo. (Page 103)

KIM HAGEN

Kim is from Denmark, where he shares an art studio called "Pinligt Selskab" with eight other artists. His most recent work is for *Negative Burn*, "The Lad Who Wished to Meet Fear." (Page 101)

CRAIG HAMILTON

Craig lives in the Deep South and hates mediocrity. Went to Catholic school, developed good handwriting, and thanks the goddess for a special shoemaker elf named Ray. (Page 177)

DANNY HELLMAN

Hail the new dawn! Early next year, Untermensch Hellman will be rocketed to the lunar surface to do battle with Wippy the Two-Headed Death Slarg. Never forget, he gives his life to save us all. (Page 43)

FRED HEMBECK

Having been responsible for *Fred Hembeck Destroys the Marvel Universe*, Hembeck is no stranger to weird death. He lives in upstate New York with wife Lynn and daughter Julie. (Page 100)

GRAHAM HIGGINS

Has contributed to *Punch*, Knockabout Comics, and *Fortean Times*. Taught comic art in college and prison. Owns no cats. (Page 53)

ED HILLYER

Ilya "The Terrible" has worked for everyone (DC, Marvel, Dark Horse, Deadline, Tundra, Fleetway, Kodansha) but has returned to self-publishing with *The End of the Century Club*. Go figure. (Page 47)

NGHIA LAM

Nghia was born in a country that no longer exists. He now lives in the deserts of San Diego, where he enjoys the company of blowfish and blond women. (Page 29)

ROGER LANGRIDGE

Roger is the artist of *Zoot!*, an obscure black-and-white published by Fantagraphics, and has worked on *Deadline*, *Judge Dredd*, and for anybody else who will pay the rent. (Page 119)

BATTON LASH

Batton Lash is the creator of *Wolf & Byrd*, *Counselors of the Macabre* and the writer of the *Archie/Punisher* crossovers. His cartooning appears in the other Factoid Big Books. (Page 15)

STEVE LEIALOHA

Okay: *Quack*, *Spider-Woman*, *The Black Hood*, *Trypto the Acid Dog*, and *Jack the Lego Boy* are but a few of the titles I have worked on in the past twenty years. (Page 184)

GRAHAM MANLEY

On moonlit nights, Graham Manley can sometimes be seen wandering aimlessly among the heather-covered hills and glens of Scotland. His interests include graveyards and dismembering Barbie dolls. (Page 106)

MARK MARTIN

Mark Martin's work has appeared in *Nickelodeon Magazine*, *Cracked*, *Duplex Planet*, and scads of other periodicals, including his own *20 Nude Dancers 20* and *Tantalizing Stories*. (Page 97)

CHRIS McLOUGHLIN

Chris was born on November 1, 1971. His work in comics includes other Big Book segments, *Mirror, Mirror* by Nick Vince, and phone calls when he should be in bed. (Page 143)

LINDA MEDLEY

Little Linda would still like to be a housewife when she grows up. (Page 126)

MITCH O'CONNELL

Mitch is an award-winning, nationally-exhibited fine artist whose work has appeared in *National Lampoon*, *Spy*, and *Playboy*, among many publications. (Page 123)

MICHAEL AVON OEMING

Boneheads in Ghost Town and sometime *Judge Dredd* artist, enjoys Jim Morrison poems, Brady Bunch reruns, and Star Wars. He believes in UFOs. (Page 60)

JOE ORLANDO

A leading writer-editor-designer-cartoonist-illustrator in comics since 1950, Joe is also the Vice-President/Creative Director for DC Comics, and the Associate Publisher of *MAD Magazine*. (Page 68)

TAYYAR OZKAN

Tayyar is a Turkish-born Kurd living in New York. His artwork has appeared in *World War III Illustrated* and *Heavy Metal*. He drew *La Pacifica*, written by Joel Rose and Amos Poe, the first graphic novel in the Paradox Mystery line. (Page 64)

TIM PERKINS

Artist based in Blackburn, England, producing pencils, inks, and colors for DC, Marvel, Marvel U.K., *2000 AD* and *Defiant*. Present work tentatively titled *Pathfinders* for an independent British comics company. (Page 108)

WOODROW PHOENIX

Woodrow Phoenix doesn't care to think about the afterlife too much, since he'll find out soon enough anyway. Do you know that there are more people dead now than living? (Page 139)

FRANK QUITELY

Born Glasgow, Scotland, 1968. Unsuccessful spell in Glasgow School of Art. Dabbled in small press while freelancing for several years. Became a full-time comic artist in early 1993. (Page 17)

RICHARD PIERS RAYNER

Russ Manning Award-winner for Most Promising Newcomer in 1989, Richard has illustrated *Dr. Fate*, *L.E.G.I.O.N. '90*, *Swamp Thing* and *Hellblazer*. He is also drawing *Road to Perdition*, a graphic novel in the Paradox Mystery line, written by Max Allan Collins. (Page 92)

HARRY S. ROBINS

Robins is a San Francisco "underground" cartoonist who has appeared in *Weirdo*, *Rip Off*, *Anarchy*, *Young Lust*, and numerous others. He is one of the heads of the notorious Church of the Sub-Genius. (Page 99)

JAMES ROMBERGER

James has recurring nightmares about hiding bodies. He has a graphic novel in progress called *The Forgotten Ones*, with Marguerite Van Cook and A.B. Faulkner, about the Rakowitz case. (Page 169)

GREG RUTH

Ruth was conceived on December 28, 1970 and born on October 3, 1991. This extraordinarily long carriage period won him and his mother front stage in the Rizzuto Bros. Carnival and Freak Show. (Page 82)

RICHARD SALA

Sala's books — *Hypnotic Tales*, *Thirteen O'Clock*, and *Black Cat Crossing* — are filled with creepy killers and mesmerizing mysteries. His animated serial, *Invisible Hands*, appeared on MTV's *Liquid Television*. (Page 98)

ZINA SAUNDERS

Zina's credits include painted cards for *Superman: Man of Steel*, *Star Wars*, and *Mars Attacks*. She is just finishing the last of a 96-card set entitled *Native Americans*. (Page 157)

TRISTAN SCHANE

Tristan Schane was born in Brooklyn, New York, October 1968. (Page 10)

BOB SMITH

Born: Aberdeen, Washington, 1951. Art education: BFA, Western Washington State University, 1974. I've been inking comics for DC since 1975. About every ten years, Andy Helfer lets me pencil something. (Page 192)

ROBIN SMITH

Robin was the art director for *2000 AD*, and an artist on *Judge Dredd*. He is the illustrator of *The Bogie Man* and *Green Candles*, two graphic novels in the Paradox Mystery line. (Page 130)

STEVE SMITH

Steve has been using the alphabet for many years. Other examples of his penmanship and pictures may be found in *Negative Burn*, *Aesop's Desecrated Fables*, and along the 101 freeway. (Page 211)

ALEC STEVENS

Alec almost enjoys music more than art, being guitarist/composer in the Christian rock band The Quest. He cites Bartók, Stravinsky, Coltrane, Focus, Glassharp, and early Zappa as favorites. (Page 121)

BARRON STOREY

Illustrator and teacher, was proud to see many of his students become notable in comics. His own "big break" came when Bill Koeb and Dave McKean introduced him to Kevin Eastman and the *Marat-Sade Journals* were published by Tundra. (Page 198)

S.M. TAGGART

If you're not familiar with Séan's Jerky Boys illustrations, you must have spent the last six months in a coma. Whatever. (Pages 8 and 209)

JEAN-PHILIPPE VIDON

Artist of the graphic novel *Tout Va Bien* (with writer/film director Jan Bucquoy), which became the movie *The Sex Life of Belgians*. Currently has a project with writer Bruce Benderson. (Page 102)

ALEX WALD

Alex is the human host for the astral entity known as Sun Demon Leo. He recently did an illustration for *Hustler*. Please don't tell his mom. (Page 205)

ANDREW WENDEL

Former portraitist for *The New Yorker*, fueled by passions for music, cycling, and the bizarre, Andrew also had a piece in *The Big Book of Urban Legends*. He is currently employed by a rival company. (Page 31)

MARK WHEATLEY

Mark holds the Inkpot and Speakeasy Awards for his creations, including *Mars* and *Breathaker*. Current projects: *Radical Dreamer* for Blackball Comics and *Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight* and *Argus* for DC. (Page 74)

PHIL WINSLADE

Phil lives and works in Birmingham, England with his wife, Pippa, 75 teddy bears, and his overdrafted account. He hopes someone buys *Goddess* from DC/Vertigo (for the bears' sake). (Page 34)

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CHAPTER ONE: MAKING A KILLING

A SHORT HISTORY OF EXECUTION

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Bragonier Jr., R. and D. Fisher. *What's What*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1981. p. 452.

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Shadows of Death. Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1992. pp. 82-83.

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CAPITAL PUNISHMENT — IT'S A GAS

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LETHAL INJECTION

Execution Protocol, a film by Stephen Trombley, 1992, England.

Panati, C. *Panati's Extraordinary Endings of Practically Everything and Everybody*. New York: Harper & Row, 1989. p. 161.

Sifakis, Carl. *The Encyclopedia of American Crime*. New York: Facts on File, 1982. p. 240.

Wilson, Keith D. *Cause of Death*. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 1992. pp. 134-136.

LAST SUPPERS

An article from the *Dallas Morning News* circa July 1989.

CHAPTER TWO: NEVER SAY DIE

STUPID MURDERS

Various news stories from *New York Newsday* and the UPI wire service, 1989, 1991.

LOOK OUT! IT'S THE KILLER POSTMEN!

Marr, J. "Please Mr. Postman Don't Shoot." *Murder Can Be Fun* No. 14 (1992). Various newspaper stories from the *The New York Times* and *New York Newsday*, 1987-1993.

THE WIDE WORLD OF DEATH

BUD DWYER:

Various broadcasts of of Dwyer's news conference from January 1987.

Shadows of Death. Alexandria, Virginia: Time-Life Books, 1992. pp. 86.

CECIL ANDREWS:

Time March 21, 1983.

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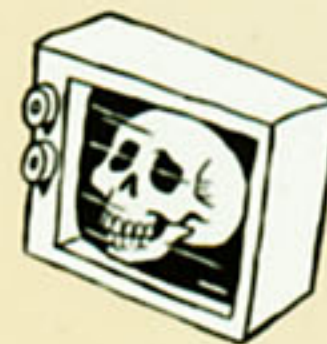


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